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The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy

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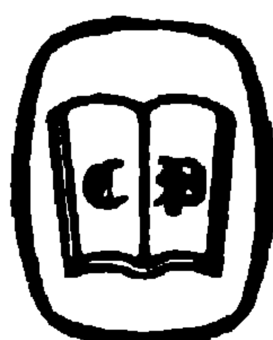


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Editor
JOGENDRA CHUNDER GHOSE

With an English Translation of
TUHFATUL MUWAHHIDDIN

VOLUME 1



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CONTENTS.



	PAGE.
Biographical Sketch of the Author	ix
Introduction	xiii
Translation of an abridgment of the Ved·.nta	1
Do. the Mundakopanishad	19
Do. the Kenopanishad	33
Do. the Kathopanishad	43
Do. the Isopanishad	61
Divine Worship by means of the Gayatri	79
A Defence of Hindu Theism	87
A Second Defence of the Monotheistical System . the Vedas ...	101
An Apology for the Pursuit of Final Beatitude	127
Religious instructions founded on sacred authorities	133
The Brahmunical Magazine	143
Answer of a Hindu, &c.	199
Translation of a Sanskrit Tract on Different Modes of Worship	205
Humble Suggestions, &c.	209
The Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj	213
Autobiographical Sketch	223
Introduction, &c.	227
Preliminary Remarks—Brief Sketch of the Ancient and Modern Boundaries and History of India	231
Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India ...	239
Do. do. on the Revenue System of India ...	277
A paper on the Revenue System of India	287
Additional Queries, respecting the condition of India... ...	295
Appendix	303
Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans	313

PAGE.

Translation of a Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the practice of Burning Widows Alive; from the original Bungla 321

A second Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the practice of Burning Widows Alive 333

Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows, considered as a Religious Rite 365

Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance 373

Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal: Appendix: Hindoo Law of Inheritance 385

Petition against the Press Regulation: (1) to the Supreme Court, and (2) to the King in Council 435

A letter to Lord Amherst on English Education 469

Address to Lord William Bentinck 475

Anti-Suttee Petition to the House of Commons 479

The Precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness ... 481

An Appeal to the Christian Public in Defence of the Precepts of Jesus 545

Second Appeal to the ditto ditto ... 56

Final Appeal to the ditto ditto ... 67

A Letter on the Prospects of Christianity 875

The Common Basis of Hindooism and Christianity 889

A Dialogue between a Missionary and Three Chinese Converts 909

Speeches and Letters 915

Petition to Government against the Resumption of Lakheraj Lands 935

A Present to the Believers in one God 941

Index 959

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.



1.	**Portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy**	... ...	*Frontispiece.*
2.	" " "	*To face page* ..	**223**
3.	**Death-mask** " "	" " ...	**481**
4.	**Tomb** " "	" " ...	**875**

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.



Raja Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahma Samaj or the Theistic Church of India, was born at Radhanagar, Bengal, in May 1772, of an ancient and honourable Brahman family. His father gave him a good education; he learnt Persian at home, Arabic at Patna (where he studied Euclid, Aristotle and the Koran), and Sanskrit at Benares. Although a devout idolater in boyhood, he early began to doubt and speculate, and at fifteen left home to study Buddhism in Tibet, where his criticisms on Lama-worship gave much offence. After some years' travel he returned, but, his anti-idolatrous sentiments obliging him to leave home, he lived at Benares until his father's death in 1803. After this, he spent about ten years in the East India Company's service, latterly as Dewan or head officer in the collection of Revenues. During this period he first began to assemble his friends together for evening discussions on the absurdities of idolatory, and he also issued his first work, Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin ("A gift to Monotheists"). This treatise was in Persian, with an Arabic preface, and was a bold protest against superstition and priestcraft. These proceedings brought on him much hostility, and even persecution, and in 1814 he retired to Calcutta for greater safety. Here he soon established a little Friendly Society (Atmiya Sabha), which met weekly to read the Hindu Scriptures and to chant Monotheistic hymns. In 1816 he translated the Vedanta into Bengali and Hindustani, following this by a series of translations from the Upanishads into Bengali, Hindustani and English, with introductions and comments of his own. These works he published at his own cost and disseminated widely among his countrymen. His writings excited much opposition and gave rise to numerous controversies, in which his ability, tact and learning rendered him fully a match for his antagonists. But the deadliest blow he inflicted upon Hindu superstition was his effective agitation against the rite of Suttee, the burning of living widows on the piles of their deceased husbands

In 1811 he had been a horrified witness of this sacrifice in his elder brother's family, and he had vowed never to rest until he had uprooted this custom. He exposed the hollow pretences of its advocates in elaborate pamphlets both in Bengali and English, and pressed the matter in every possible way, till at last the tide of public feeling turned, and on December 4, 1829, Lord William Bentinck issued a regulation abolishing Suttee throughout all the territories subject to Fort William. Rammohun was an active politician and philanthropist. He built school-houses and established schools in which useful knowledge was gratuitously taught through the medium both of the English and the native languages. He wrote a suggestive Bengali Grammar, of which he published one version in English (1826) and one in Bengali (1833). He wrote valuable pamphlets on Hindu law and made strenuous exertions for the freedom of the native Press; he also established (1822) and mainly conducted two native newspapers, the *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali, and the *Mirat-al-Akhbar* in Persian and made them the means of diffusing much useful political information. Becoming interested in Christianity he learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Bible in the original languages, and in 1820 he issued a selection from the four Gospels entitled--the Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and happiness. This was attacked by the Baptist Missionaries of Serampur, and a long controversy ensued in which he published three remarkable Appeals to the Christian Public in defence of the "Precepts of Jesus." He also wrote other theological tracts (sometimes under assumed names) in which he attacked both Hindu and Christian orthodoxy with a strong hand. But his personal relations with orthodox Christians were never unfriendly, and he rendered valuable assistance to Dr. Duff in the latter's educational schemes. He also warmly befriended a Unitarian Christian Mission which was started in Calcutta (1824) by Mr. William Adam, formerly a Baptist Missionary, who, in attempting to convert Rammohun to trinitarianism was himself converted to the opposite view. This Unitarian Mission, though not a theological success, attracted considerable sympathy among the Hindu Monotheists, whose Atmiya Sabha had then become extinct. At last Rammohun felt able to re-embody his cherished ideal, and on August 20, 1828, he opened the first Brahma Association (Brahma Sabha) at a hired house.

A suitable church-building was then erected and placed in the hands of trustees, with a small endowment and a remarkable trust-deed by which the building was set apart "for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the universe." The new church was formally opened on the 11th Magh (January 23), 1830, from which day the Brahma Samaj dates its existence. Having now succeeded in his chief projects, Rammohun resolved to visit England, and the King of Delhi appointed him envoy thither on special business, and gave him the title of Raja. He arrived in England on April 8, 1831, and was received with universal cordiality and respect. He watched with special anxiety the parliamentary discussions on the renewal of the East India Company's charter and gave much valuable evidence before the Board of Control on the condition of India. This he republished with additional suggestions ("Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India") and also reissued his important "Essay on the Right of Hindus over Ancestral Property." He visited France, and wished to visit America, but died unexpectedly of brain-fever at Bristol, September 27, 1833.--*The Encyclopædia Britannica.*

INTRODUCTION.

All earnest attempts at reform, whether religious, social, political, or of any other description, are based on faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice and humanity, which is synonymous with a belief in the moral government of the Universe. This is an essential element in religious belief. One would, therefore, expect to find Raja Rammohun Roy, the first all-round reformer in modern India, "above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able to go so far or to move his countrymen so mightily as he did but for the driving power of an intense theistic passion." As in his life so in his writings, religion occupies the foremost place. His writings on religious subjects are the most important and most voluminous. But their very extent and variety are apt to puzzle those who may strive to find out the exact nature of his religious faith. The late Babu Rajnarain Bose had it from his father, a disciple of the Raja, that the latter before his departure to England had foretold that after his death various sects would claim him as belonging to their own particular ranks, but he declared that he did not belong to any particular sect. What the Raja foresaw has actually taken place. "It has been said that Rammohun Roy delighted to pass for a believer in the Vedanta with the Hindus, for a Christian among the adherents of that creed, and for a disciple of the Koran with the champions of Islamism.* The truth is that his eclecticism equalled his sincerity." † It would be out of place here to enter into a discussion of the question of his religious belief. ‡ Suffice it to say that he believed in pure theism, as his *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin* on the one hand and the Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Samaj on the other, in addition to

* His habit, in his religious controversies with various sects, of taking his stand not merely upon pure reason but mainly upon their scriptures led some people to think that he was all things to all men. This, of course, is a mistake. His controversial method was meant to convince the followers of different faiths that even their scriptures, which they professed implicitly to follow, enjoined the worship of the one true God.

† *The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought*, by Count Goblet d'Alviella, p. 233.

‡ For an exhaustive discussion of the subject see the Raja's biography in Bengali, by Babu Nagendranath Chatterji, which ought to be translated into English.

many of his other works, prove conclusively. He did not reject any truth to be found in any scriptures or in the teachings of any prophet or saint; he revered and accepted truth from all quarters, but at the same time he did not accept any book or teacher as infallible. It should not, however, be forgotten that though he was thus cosmopolitan in his acceptance of truth, there are reasons to think that he believed in what may be called national or racial manifestations or developments of universal theism. His partiality (in no narrow sense) for the ethical portion of Christ's teachings is evident. But it would be wrong to suppose for that reason that he was exclusively or even principally a follower of Jesus. In making this statement we do not solely or chiefly rely on his prose writings in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, English or Bengali. His hymns in Bengali, too, in our opinion, afford a correct idea of the faith that lay enshrined in the deepest recesses of his heart. For, poetry springs from a deeper source in the soul than anything that is merely didactic, controversial, doctrinal or philosophical. And from the Raja's Bengali devotional poetry, one cannot but take him to have been a Hindu Theist or a theistic Vedantist.

It is sometimes asked whether Rammohun Roy intended that the society for the worship of one God that he founded should have a social counterpart in a religious community separate from all existing ones, such as the Brahmo Samaj has now become. The question is difficult to answer. But from the little study and thought that we have been able to devote to the subject, it seems to us that at the time when he established the Brahmo Samaj, he meant it to be simply a meeting-ground for people of all sects who wished to unite for divine worship, "a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the author and preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever.' Art and philosophy, though each is essentially one all the world over, have yet found various though fitting garb among different peoples according to racial, climatic and other causes. It seems to us, that similarly, the Raja may have thought that Theism, though at bottom one all over the world, has yet found various expression among different races; and though abstract truth is thinkable, yet as it finds actual manifestation in some concrete shape, it is the part of wisdom to allow the abstract universal theism in all countries and among all races to keep its native shape and colour, in which it is embodied, freed, of course, from all that is base and impure, with

a broad spirit of toleration for other shapes and colours: or in other words, he may have believed that Theism is one, and Hindu Theism, Semitic Theism, &c., are different forms of the same universal faith; and that the future unity of the human race in religion is not to be realised by all mankind following the creed of this or that sect, but by each nation or race giving up all such erroneous and superstitious beliefs and pernicious customs and lifeless rituals as clash with pure Theism, but in every thing else keeping all that is racy of the soil, all that distinctively belongs to the religious genius of that nation or race, in a spirit of discriminating reverence for its own past and of respect and toleration for others.

Professor Monier Williams speaks of him as the first really earnest investigator in the science of comparative theology, which the world has produced.

Social customs and practices have been and are in all countries more or less connected with the religious beliefs of the people. It is, therefore, only natural that Rammohun Roy's programme of religious reform should lead on to and embrace social reform. In all countries, and specially in India, social reform consists chiefly in doing away with the disabilities or sufferings incident to difference of sex or the accident of birth. Or, in other words, social reformers have chiefly to fight with the spirit of caste and its evils and the subjection of women to the selfish interests and pleasures or supposed interests of the male sex. Rammohun Roy's chief claim to the gratitude of Hindu womanhood is the courageous and devoted part that he played in the movement for the abolition of *suttee*. He may or may not have been the central figure in that movement, but it must be admitted by all that but for his exertions that inhuman custom would not have been put down by law so soon as it was.

But to prevent the murder of widows was only to create another problem, namely, the amelioration of their condition. It is even now a question as to how we can best better their lot. Many solutions of the problem have been proposed and attempted; their re-marriage, giving them such training as to enable them to lead honourable, useful and independent lives, so changing the Hindu law of inheritance as to make the means of living of Hindu widows less precarious, &c. His "Brief remarks regarding modern encroachments on the ancient rights of females, according to the Hindu Law of inheritance," was intended to attain the last object. That the condition of helpless widows deeply touched his heart appears also from No. VI. of the *Sambad Kaumudi*, which contained "an appeal to the rich Hindus of Calcutta to constitute a society for the relief of destitute widows, upon the principles of the Civil and Military Widows' Fund, established by order of Government." That he was earnestly in favour of

the education of women is quite clear from many passages in his writings, such, for instance, as the following:—

"As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Sastras: moreover, in the Vrihadaranyak-Opanishad of the Yajur Veda it is clearly stated, that Yajnavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it!"

It is true that even with his unbounded enthusiasm in woman's cause and his indefatigable energy he could not take any steps for educating girls, widowed or unmarried; but it may be safely said that had he lived to return home from England and work here for a few years more, his contact with the comparatively enlightened womanhood of the West would certainly have borne fruit in the establishment of educational institutions for Indian girls and women. That Miss Mary Carpenter came out to India to labour for the good of Indian women is due mainly to her contact with the Raja. Regarding the re-marriage of child-widows, it is believed by some that he published a book advocating its introduction but no such production has been discovered among his works. His biographer, Babu Nagendranath Chatterji, says:—"We have heard that Rammohun Roy used to express a desire to his friends that the re-marriage of child-widows should become prevalent. When he went to England, a rumour spread everywhere that on coming back home he would introduce the custom of the re-marriage of widows."

It will appear from a study of his "Brief remarks regarding the ancient rights of females" that he was opposed to polygamy, kulinism and the practical selling of girls in marriage. He showed from the Shastras that second marriages were authorised only under certain circumstances, and observed:

"Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorized by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of a first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above Law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal, and the number of suicides, would have been necessarily very much reduced."

We have no indication in his works of his views on child-marriage. Perhaps in his days in Bengal, though such marriages must have been customary, their consummation was postponed to a maturer age, thus minimizing the evil to some extent, as is still the case in some provinces of India. But with regard to this item, too, of the social reform programme, one can only speculate as to what he would have

done had he lived to come back from England. For, a man, who had such innate chivalry in his nature that he would never take his seat if any woman of what rank so ever remained standing in his presence, could not have failed to observe the evil effects on women of such a custom, at any rate after coming in contact with the comparatively free and healthy womanhood of the West.

That Rammohun Roy had not failed to observe the evil effects of caste will appear from the extract from one of his letters printed on page 929 of this edition. No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi*, too, prints the plea of a philanthropist [probably himself], who observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate "such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence." By crossing the ocean and in other ways, the Raja, to a great extent, broke through the unreasonable and injurious restrictions imposed by caste Why he did not or could not do so entirely, is not known to a certainty. But from his conduct in other matters, we should hesitate to ascribe to him any motives of cowardice or self-interest. He published with a Bengali translation the first chapter of a Sanskrit work against caste, named *Bajrasuchi*, by Mrityunjayacharya.

In most things Raja Rammohun Roy was in advance of his age, and rose above the influence of his surroundings. He was the pioneer in many reform movements. But in the matter of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, his views and practice differed from those of most reformers of the present day. He was a moderate drinker and even quoted some Shastras in favour of the practice There is also another matter in which he was not in advance of his age. In his "Brief remarks regarding the ancient rights of females," he says that of the three modes of conduct left to the widows of a polygamous man to pursue, the second is "to walk in the paths of unrighteousness for their maintenance and independence." And this he, of course, condemns, and thereby shows himself to be, as we otherwise also know him to have been, an advocate of social purity. Yet it would appear that he found nothing objectionable in entertaining his guests with the nautch and music of dancing girls in his residence. For we find in Fanny Parkes' "Wanderings of a Pilgrim," Vol. I, Chap. IV (Residence in Calcutta, May 1823), the following passage :—

'The other evening we went to a party given by Rammohun Roy, a rich Bengali baboo: the grounds, which are extensive, were well illuminated, and excellent fire-works displayed. In various rooms of the house nach girls were dancing and singing.".

It is well known that Rammohun Roy himself founded and helped others in founding schools. He took a prominent part in the great educational controversy between the "Orientalists" and the "Anglicists"

and sided with the latter. But for his opposition the clamour of the former for the exclusive pursuit of Oriental studies would most probably have prevailed. His *Letter on English Education* to Lord Amherst is a remarkably convincing production.*

"It was owing, perhaps, to this agitation," remarks Babu Jogendra Chunder Ghose on this letter, "that the foundation-stone of the building intended for the Sanskrit College was laid in the name of the Hindu College (February, 1824), and the Hindu College was located there together with the Sanskrit College." For the direct and indirect beneficial results of Western education we are indebted to Raja Rammohun Roy as much as to Lord Macaulay, Lord William Bentinck, David Hare, &c.

Rammohun Roy wrote text-books in Bengali on Grammar, Geography, Astronomy and Geometry. He is the father of modern Bengali

* One passage in this letter possesses a special interest of its own. It runs thus:—

"Neither can much improvement arise from such speculations as the following which are the themes suggested by the Vedanta,- in what manner is the soul absorbed in the Deity? What relations does it bear to the Divine Essence? Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe, that all visible things have no real existence, that as father, brother, &c., have no actual entity, they consequently deserve no real affection, and therefore the sooner we escape from them and leave the world the better."

The missionaries advanced in the *Samachar Darpan*, the last objection, which Rammohun assailed in his *Brahmunical Magazine*. He further established a Vedanta College. This seeming inconsistency is explained by Miss Collett as follows:—"The teachings of the Vedanta lend themselves to a remarkable diversity of theological interpretation. They are appealed to equally by dualistic and non-dualistic schools of thought. They contain passages which breathe a lofty and ethical Theism; in other places they seem to countenance a Pantheism that is simply Acosmism—the denial of all finite existence; . . . According as the Vedanta is taught with or without a proper selective adjustment of its widely various contents, its value as a subject of instruction may be set high or low. In the ordinary Hindu schools it was taught in false perspective, with a discrimination exercised if at all in favour of what was trivial, incorrect, polytheistic. Rammohun therefore opposed with all his might the suggestion that the British Government should perpetuate or encourage this kind of Vedantic instruction. At the same time he saw in the Vedanta rightly handled and "rightly divided" a means for leading his countrymen out of their prevailing superstition and idolatry into a pure and elevated Theism. Their devotion to the Vedantic scriptures was the lever by which Rammohun hoped to lift them into a simpler and nobler faith. Therefore he founded the Vedanta College; and therefore also he controverted the missionaries' wholesale disparagement of the Vedanta. If the missionaries had succeeded in discrediting the Vedanta, they would in Rammohun's eyes have broken down the bridge which enabled men to pass from Hindu Polytheism to Hindu Theism. He thus combated both the conservative Christian who advocated indiscriminate rejection and the conservative Hindu who advocated the indiscrimate retention of Vedantic teaching; and he provided for a discriminating instruction in the ancient system which should have the approval of liberal Hindus and liberal Christians."

literary prose. He taught his people the use of marks of punctuation. There was in his nature a deep vein of genuine poetry, too; as his Bengali hymns show. He was the first to write theistic hymns in Bengali. Pandit Ramagati Nyayaratna, a well-known Hindu historian of the Bengali language and literature, truly observes that "they appear to possess the power of melting even stony hearts, of making the most irreligious devoted to God and of making hearts sunk in wordliness detached from the world." They are prized by theists and idolaters alike. A few of them are in Sanskrit. We believe an English translation of Rammohun's hymns by Babu Mohinimohan Chatterjee, M. A., has been published by the Adi Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta.

His Bengali journal, the *Sambad Kaumudi*, first appeared in 1821. He is the founder of native journalism in India. The *Sambad Kaumudi* was not exclusively or chiefly a political publication. It, as well as his Persian newspaper, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* or *Mirror of Intelligence*, had an educational purpose, too. Besides politics, subjects of a historical, literary and scientific character were treated of therein.

Lawyers of eminence have declared that the legal writings of the Raja, such as his "Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights," "The Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal," would do credit to jurists of the highest standing.

To the public Rammohun Roy is best known as a religious and social reformer. To many he is also known as a literateur and educationist. But he is not so well known as a political reformer and agitator. A brief account of his politics may not therefore be out of place here.

Mr. William Adam, a Baptist Missionary, whose association with Raja Rammohun Roy led him to adopt Unitarian opinions, bears the following testimony to his love of liberty :—

"He would be free or not be at all..... Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul,—freedom not of action merely, but of thought. .....This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him."

It was this love of liberty that was the source of all his political opinions and the mainspring of all his political activity. It made him take interest in and deeply sympathise with all political movements all over the world that had for their object the advancement of popular freedom. Some instances may here be given of Rammohun's cosmopolitan sympathies in the region of politics.

"When the intelligence reached India that the people of Naples after extorting a constitution from their despotic king were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops, in obedience to the joint mandate of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia, and Naples, Rammohun felt it keenly."

In a letter to Mr. Buckingham, dated August 11, 1821, he wrote :—

"I am afraid I must be under the necessity of denying myself the pleasure of your society this evening; more especially as my mind is depressed by the late news from Europe......From the late unhappy news I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy.

"Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be, ultimately successful."

"These noble words," says Miss Collett, "reveal how profoundly Rammohun felt with the late Russel Lowell that "In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim" ; and that

"Wherever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding Sun,
That wrong is also done to us."

Rammohun's Persian weekly *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* contained an article on "Ireland, the causes of its distress and discontent". In this he dwelt on the evils of absenteeism and the injustice of maintaining Protestant clergymen out of revenues wrung from the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland. He said :—

How admirable is the observation of Saadi (on whom be mercy!)

"Do not say that these rapacious ministers are the well-wishers of his Majesty ;
For in proportion as they augment the revenue of the State, they diminish his popularity ;
O statesman, apply the revenue of the king towards the comfort of the people ; then during their lives they will be loyal to him."

When the news of the establishment of constitutional Government in Spain reached India, he gave a public dinner at the Town Hall. Some months before his departure for England, news reached Calcutta of the latest French Revolution, and, "so great was his enthusiasm that," we are told, "he could think and talk of nothing else!" He viewed it as a triumph of liberty and rejoiced accordingly. On his voyage to England he landed at the Cape for only an hour or two. "Returning on board he met with a nasty accident. The gangway ladder had not been properly secured, and he got a serious fall, from which he was lame for eighteen months afterwards and indeed never finally recovered. But no bodily suffering could repress his mental ardour. Two French frigates, under the revolutionary flag, the glorious tri-colour, were lying in Table Bay ; and lame as he was, he would insist on visiting them. The sight of these colours seemed to kindle his enthusiasm, and to render him insensible to pain." During the days of the Reform Bill agitation in England, he

considered the struggle between the reformers and anti-reformers as a struggle between liberty and oppression throughout the world: between justice and injustice, and between right and wrong. He publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, he would renounce his connection with England. His Persian weekly, the *Mirat*, did not, however, favourably consider the national aspirations of Greece. Muhammadan sympathy with the Turks may have been to some extent responsible for this attitude to Greece

We now pass on to the Raja's Indian polical opinions. Our politics are sure to be tinged by our attitude towards British rule in India. It is therefore necessary to know what the Raja thought of British rule in India in his day. In his autobiography he writes :–

"......I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British Power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me, and restored me to his favour; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants;......"

He concluded his "Final Appeal to the Christian Public"

"by offering up thanks to the supreme Disposer of the events of this universe, for having unexpectedly delivered this country from the long-continued tyranny of its former Rulers, and placed it under the government of the English,—a nation who not only are blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty, but also interest themselves in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects, among those nations to which their influence extends."

But Rammohun gave to Muhammadan rule also its due meed of praise by mentioning in what respects it was superior to British rule. He wrote in his "Appeal to the King in Council" against the Press Regulation :—

"Your Majesty is aware, that under their former Mohammadan Rulers, the natives of this country enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussulmans, being eligible to the highest offices in the State, entrusted with the command of armies and the government of provinces and often chosen as advisers to their Prince, without disqualification or degrading distinction on account of their religion or the place of their birth. They used to receive free grants of land exempted from any payments of revenue, and besides the highest salaries allowed under the Government, they enjoyed free of charge large tracts of country attached to certain offices of trust and dignity, while natives of learning and talent were rewarded with numerous situations of honour and emolument. Although under the British Rule, the natives of India, have entirely lost this political consequence.......", &c.

Some of the contents of the earlier numbers of the *Sambad Kaumudi* may be given here :—

No. I.—An appeal to the Government for the establishment of a school for the gratuitous instruction of the poor but respectable Hindus.

No. II.—Humble address to the Government soliciting the extension of trial by jury to Mofussil, Zilla and Provincial Courts of Judicature.

No. III.—An appeal to the Government to relieve the Hindu community from the inconvenience consequent upon there being only one Ghaut for the burning of dead bodies whereas an immense space of ground has been granted for the burial of Christians.

Appeal to Government for the prevention of the exportation of the greatest part of the produce of rice from Bengal to foreign ports.

Appeal to Government to enable the middle class of native subjects to avail themselves of the treatment of European physicians.

Appeal to the Calcutta Magistrates to resort to rigorous measures for relieving the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta from the serious grievance of Christian gentlemen driving their buggies amongst them and cutting and lashing them with whips, without distinction of sex or age, while they quietly assembled in immense numbers to see the images of their deities pass in the Chitpore Road, when many of them through terror and consternation caused by the lashing inflicted on the spectators fell down into drains, while others were trampled under foot by the crowd.

Raja Rammohun Roy believed that a free Press is one of the best safeguards of liberty. This conviction found expression in his petitions against the Press Regulation (1) to the Supreme Court, and (2) to the King in Council. The Press ordinance prescribed that thenceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a license from the Governor-General in Council, signed by the Chief Secretary. The memorial submitted to the Supreme Court "may be regarded as the Areopagitica of Indian History. Alike in diction and in argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of English culture in the East."

This Memorial proving fruitless, Rammohun and his co-adjutors appealed to the King in council. Says Miss Collett :—

"The appeal is one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand. Its stately periods and not less stately thought recall the eloquence of the great orators of a century ago. In a language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty, it invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British History."

This Memorial, too, proved unavailing. The Privy Council declined to comply with the petition.

A new Jury Act came into operation in the beginning of 1827. On August 18th, 1828, Rommohun wrote to Mr. J. Crawford and entrusted to him petitions against the Act for presentation to both Houses of

Parliament, signed by Hindus and Mohammedans. He thus concisely stated the grounds of grievance :—

"In his famous Jury Bill, Mr. Wynn, the late President of the Board of Control, has by introducing religious distinctions into the judicial system of this country, not only afforded just grounds for dissatisfaction among the Natives in general, but has excited much alarm in the breast of every one conversant with political principles. Any Natives, either Hindu or Mohamedan, are rendered by this Bill subject to judicial trial by Christians, either European or Native, while Christians, including Native converts, are exempted from the degradation of being tried either by a Hindu or Mussulman juror, however high he may stand in the estimation of society. This Bill also denies both to Hindus and Mohamedans the honor of a seat in the Grand Jury even in the trial of fellow Hindus or Mussulmans. This is the sum total of Mr. Wynn's late Jury Bill, of which we bitterly complain."

Rammohun went on to suggest a possibility " which is by no means so remote now as when he wrote ": -

"Supposing that 100 years hence the Native character becomes elevated from constant intercourse with Europeans and the acquirement of general and political knowledge as well as of modern arts and sciences, is it possible that they will not have the spirit as well as the inclination to resist effectually any unjust and oppressive measures serving to degrade them in the scale of society ? It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy.

"In common with those who seem partial to the British rule from the expectation of future benefits arising out of the connection, I necessarily feel extremely grieved in often witnessing Acts and Regulations passed by Government without consulting or seeming to understand the feelings of its Indian subjects and without considering that this people have had for more than half a century the advantage of being ruled by and associated with an enlightened nation, advocates of liberty and promoters of knowledge."

The letter quoted above is remarkable for the far-sighted glance into the future which it reveals. Here in germ is to be found the national aspiration which is now breaking forth into demands for a greater measure of self-government than the people at present enjoy. Rammohun's English biographer observes that

"The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind ; and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilization inevitably involves. Here again Rammohun stands forth as the tribune and prophet of New India."

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which was appointed in February, 1831, and reappointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter invited him to appear before it.

Rammohun declined this request but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control." The first of these dealt with Revenue. The Raja appears here as the champion of the rack-rented ryot. While the Zemindars or landholders had been greatly benefited by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community had generally increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. The remedy he asked for was in the first place the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the ryot in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zemindar so as to ensure a reduction in the ryot's rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries or by employing as Collectors low-salaried Indians instead of high-salaried Europeans. It may here be incidentally observed that nearly three-quarters of a century ago, when education was in a backward condition, Raja Rammohun Roy considered Indians fit for the duties of Collectors. He also considered them well qualified to discharge all judicial duties.

He approved of the settlement in India of a few model landlords from England, but was careful to stipulate that they should not be drawn from the lower classes. This is not the place to criticize the Raja's views on this subject; but it seems open to grave doubt whether a European landed aristocracy for India would have been on the whole beneficial to the people of this country. He concluded with an earnest appeal "to any and every authority to devise some mode of alleviating the present miseries of the agricultural peasantry of India."

It admits of no doubt that the condition of the proprietors of land has improved under the system of permanent assessment. But the Government seems at present to believe that that system has resulted in loss of revenue to the State. It is, therefore, important to quote the Raja's opinion on this subject.

"The amount of assessment fixed on the lands of these provinces at the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), was as high as had ever been assessed, and in many instances higher than had ever before been realized by the exertions of any government, Mohamedan or British. Therefore the Government sacrificed nothing in concluding that settlement. If it had not been formed, the landholders (*Zemindars*) would always have taken care to prevent the revenue from increasing by not bringing the waste lands into cultivation, and by collusive arrangements to elude further demands; while the state of the cultivators would not have been at all better than it is now. However, if the Government had taken the whole estates of the country into its own hands, as in the ceded and conquered provinces and the Madras Presidency, then, by allowing the landholders only ten per cent. on the rents (*Malikanah*), and securing all the rest to the Government, it might no doubt have increased the revenue for a short time. But the whole of the landlords in the country would then have been reduced to the same wretched condition

as they are at present in, in the ceded and conquered Provinces of the Bengal Presidency or rather annihilated, as in many parts of the Madras territory; and the whole population reduced to the same level of poverty. At the same time, the temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own immediate management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shown by innumerable instances in which the estates were kept *khas*, *i.e.*, under the immediate management of Government."

"Besides, Government appropriates to itself an enormous duty on the transit and exportation of the produce of the soil, which has, since the period of the Perpetual Settlement, increased to a great amount from the exertions of the proprietors in extending and improving cultivation, under the assurance that no demand of an increase of revenue would be made upon them on account of the progressive productiveness of their estates."

The Raja contrasts the effects of the permanent and periodical systems of assessment in two statements.

"By a comparative view of the revenues of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, from the period of the Perpetual Settlement, it appears that, in the thirty-five years, from 1792-93 to 1827-28, there was a total increase on the whole amount of the Revenue of above 100 per cent. (101·71), and that this increase has been steady and progressive up to the present time;......"

"By a comparative view of the revenue of the old British territory in Madras, it appears that during the same period of thirty-five years (*i.e.* from 1793 to 1828) there was an increase of only about 40 per cent., (40·15) on the total amount of the whole revenue. That the increase during the first 17 years was 43 $\frac{12}{100}$ per cent.; that in the next 8 years the increase was only about 3½ per cent; and that in the last 18 years there has been a *decrease* of 2·15 per cent."

In an appendix he urged the Imperial utility of the policy of fixing a maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator, "that their rents already raised to a ruinous extent, might not be subject to further increase." His advocacy of this policy is so statesmanlike that no apology is needed for quoting his views on the subject. To recognise the indefeasible rights of the ryots in the soil would make them loyal to the power that secured them and

"ready to rise in defence of it, as a militia or in any other shape that might be required; so as to secure the British rule in a foreign and remote empire, alike from internal intrigue and from external aggression, without the necessity of keeping on foot an immense standing army at an enormous cost. This consideration is of great importance in respect to the natives of the upper and western provinces, who are distinguished by their superior bravery, and form the greater part of the British Indian army. If this race of men, who are by no means deficient in feelings of personal honor and regard for family respectability, were assured that their rights in the soil were indefeasible so long as the British power should endure, they would from gratitude and self-interest at all time be ready to devote their lives and property in its defence.

"The saving that might be effected by this liberal and generous policy, through the substituting of a militia force for a great part of the present standing army, would be much greater than any gain that could be realized by any system of increasing land

revenue that human ingenuity could devise. How applicable to this case is the following line of the Persian sage (Saadi):—

Ba rayat sulh kun Wa'z jang i khasm ai man nishin
Z'anki shahinshah i adil ra rayat lashkar ast.

"Be on friendly terms with thy subjects, and rest easy about the warfare of thine enemies; for to an upright prince his people is an army."

While on the subject of Land Settlement we may say that in 1828, by Regulation III of that year, the revenue collector in each district was authorised to dispossess the holders of tax-free lands by his own authority, without reference to any judicial courts, if the collector should be of opinion, after such enquiry as might satify himself that the title of the proprietor was not valid. It was therein enacted that "such decision of the Collector shall have the force and effect of a decree"; also, that "it shall not be necessary for him to transmit his proceedings to the Board of Revenue," but "the party dispossessed might appeal," and by art. 3., whether an appeal be filed or not, "that it shall and may be lawful for the Collector immediately to carry into effect his decision by attaching and assessing the lands." This regulation produced great alarm and distrust amongst the natives of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, many of whom petitioned against the principle of one party, who lays claim to the land, dispossessing an actual possessor at his own discretion. This agitation was led, though unsuccessfully, by Rammohun Roy. Reg. III of 1828 is still in force.

Among the principal measures advocated in the Raja's *Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India* were the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the courts of law; the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts; trial by jury, of which the Panchayet system was the indigenous parallel; separation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioners; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate; codification of the criminal law and also of the law of India; and consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws. The last reform proposed contains the germs of representative legislative bodies.

Students of Indian economics are familiar with the fact that every year nearly 45 crores of rupees of India's capital is drained off to foreign parts without any hope of return. This drain of wealth did not escape the eyes of Raja Rammohun Roy. In his "Revenue System of India" he says that as a large sum of money is now annually drawn from India by Europeans retiring from it with the fortunes realized there, a system which would encourage Europeans of capital to become permanent settlers with their families, would necessarily greatly improve the resources of the country. He pre-

pared several tables to prove this drain. The following two paragraphs are appended to these tables :—

"By the evidence of Messrs. Lloyd and Melville (the former the Accountant-General, and the latter the Auditor-General of the East India Company), recorded in the Minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 23rd February, 1830, it appears that the proportion of the Indian revenues *expended in England* on the territorial account amounts, on an average, to £3,000,000 annually. It includes the expenses at the Board of Control and India House, pay, absentee allowances and pensions to Civil and Military officers in Europe for services in India, with interest of money realized there, &c., &c., besides £453,588 for territorial stores consigned to India.

"In a letter of the Court of Directors to the Government of Bengal, dated the 20th of June, 1810, and quoted in the work "On Colonial Policy as applicable to the Government of India," by a very able servant of the company, holding a responsible situation in Bengal, the Directors state that "it is no extravagant assertion to advance, that the annual remittances to London on account of individuals, have been at the rate of nearly £2,000,000 per annum *for a series of years past.*" (p. 70.) From these and other authentic documents the author calculates the amount of capital, or "the aggregate o tribute, public and private, so withdrawn from India from 1765 to 1820, at £100,000,000.'f (p. 65.)

It has already been incidentally shown that Raja Rammohun Roy was in favour of the settlement in India of European capitalists under certain conditions. Among the advantages likely in his opinion to arise from such settlement was the improvement of the condition of the native inhabitants by European landlords showing them superior methods of cultivation. That this was not altogether a vain expectation appears from some observations in Mr. N. G. Mukerji's *Hand-book of Indian Agriculture.* Says Mr. Mukerji :

indeed, Indian agriculture has been actually vastly improved by our contact with the West. European planters have been the means of introducing important innovations. In the most out-of-the way places of India we find European planters carrying on agricultural experiments and improvements imperceptibly and noiselessly."

This naturally leads one to a consideration of the Raja's *Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans.* It is a paper of rare personal and national importance. But as it raises problems of great magnitude, we refrain from dealing with it here. Suffice it to say that this his final literary deliverance holds up to the people of India the prospect of India having English as its *lingua franca*, India socially and in other respects westernized to some extent, India possibly independent and India the Enlightener of Asia.

Progressive political views imply confidence in the capacity of a people for continuous improvement. Raja Rammohun Roy believed that the people of India "have the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people." He did not believe that Asiatics were naturally an inferior race. In the course of one of his numerous religious controversies "A Christian" having indulged in a tirade

about persons being "degraded by Asiatic effeminacy," the Raja reminded him that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay, even Jesus Christ himself, were Asiatics.

On a perusal of the foregoing pages it will be found that with the exception of the agitation that has been going on for sometime past for the industrial regeneration of the country, Rammohun Roy laid the foundation of all the principal modern movements for the elevation of our people. Probably, as India is mainly an agricultural country and as in his days the pressure on land had not become abnormal owing to the indigenous industries not having disappeared then to the extent to which they have now declined, the industrial problem did not then press for solution with the same urgency as now. Nevertheless we find that the bearing of the system of caste on industrial prosperity did not escape the keen eyes of Rammohun: as No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi* printed the "plea of a philanthropist, who observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence."

We conclude this introduction with the following estimate of his personality by his biographer, the late Miss Sophia Dobson Collett, who, though an English woman and a trinitarian Christian, seems on the whole to have understood the meaning of his life pretty accurately:—

"Rammohun stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure, if vague, Theism. He was the mediator of his people, harmonizing in his own person, often by means of his own solitary sufferings, the conflicting tendencies of immemorial tradition and of inevitable enlightenment."

"He embodies the new spirit which arises from the compulsory mixture of races and faiths and civilizations,—he embodies its freedom of enquiry, its thirst for science, its large human sympathy, its pure and sifted ethics, along with its reverent but not uncritical regard for the past, and prudent, even timid, disinclination towards revolt. But in the life of Rammohun we see what we hope yet to have shown us in the progress of India, that the secret of the whole movement is religious. Amid all his wanderings Rammohun was saved by his faith. * * * * He was a genuine outgrowth of the old Hindu stock; in a soil watered by new influences, and in an atmosphere charged with unwonted forcing power, but still a true scion of the old stock. The Rajah was no merely occidentalized oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian. If we follow the right line of his development we shall find that he leads the way from the orientalism of the past, not to, but through Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western

nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both. He preserves continuity throughout, by virtue of his religion, which again supplied the motive force of his progressive movement. The power that connected and restrained, as well as widened and impelled, was religion.

"Rammohun thus presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the New India of which he is the type and pioneer. He offers to the new democracy of the West a scarcely less valuable index of what our greatest Eastern dependency may yet become under the imperial sway of the British commonalty. There can be little doubt that, whatever future the destinies may have in store for India, that future will be largely shaped by the life and work of Rammohun Roy. And not the future of India alone. We stand on the eve of an unprecedented intermingling of East and West. The European and Asiatic streams of human development, which have often tinged each other before, are now approaching a confluence which bids fair to form the one ocean-river of the collective progress of mankind. In the presence of that greater Eastern question,—with its infinite ramifications, industrial, political, moral and religious,—the international problems of the passing hour, even the gravest of them, seem dwarfed into parochial pettiness. The nearing dawn of these unmeasured possibilities only throws into clearer prominence the figure of the man whose life-story we have told. He was, if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint, of the change that is to come."

TRANSLATION

OF AN

ABRIDGMENT

OF

THE VEDANT

OR

THE RESOLUTION OF ALL THE VEDS

THE

MOST CELEBRATED AND REVERED WORK OF

Brahmunical Theology ;

ESTABLISHING THE UNITY OF THE SUPREME BEING ; AND THAT

HE ALONE

IS THE OBJECT OF PROPITIATION AND WORSHIP.

CALCUTTA :

1816.

TO

THE BELIEVERS OF THE ONLY TRUE GOD.

THE greater part of Brahmans, as well as of other sects of Hindoos, are quite incapable of justifying that idolatry which they continue to practise. When questioned on the subject, in place of adducing reasonable arguments in support of their conduct, they conceive it fully sufficient to quote their ancestors as positive authorities! And some of them are become very ill-disposed towards me, because I have forsaken idolatry for the worship of the true and eternal God! In order, therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that of our early forefathers, I have been endeavouring, for some time past, to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred books; and to prove, that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me.

The whole body of the Hindoo Theology, Law, and Literature, is contained in the Vedas, which are affirmed to be coeval with the creation! These works are extremely voluminous, and being written in the most elevated and metaphorical style, are, as may be well supposed, in many passages seemingly confused and contradictory. Upwards of two thousand years ago, the great Vyasa, reflecting on the perpetual difficulty arising from these sources, composed with great discrimination a complete and compendious abstract of the whole, and also reconciled those texts which appeared to stand at variance. This work he termed *The Vedanta*, which, compounded of two Sanskrit words, signifies *The Resolution of all the Vedas*. It has continued to be most highly revered by all Hindoos, and in place of the more diffuse arguments of the Vedas, is always referred to as equal authority. But from its being concealed within the dark curtain of the Sanskrit language, and the Brahmans permitting themselves alone to interpret, or even to touch any book of the kind, the Vedanta, although perpetually quoted, is little known to the public: and the practice of few Hindoos indeed bears the least accordance with its precepts!

In pursuance of my vindication, I have to the best of my abilities translated this hitherto unknown work, as well as an abridgment thereof, into the Hindoostanee and Bengalee languages, and distributed them, free of cost, among my own countrymen, as widely as circumstances have possibly allowed. The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment of the same into English, by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates!

I have observed, that both in their writings and conversation, many Europeans feel a wish to palliate and soften the features of Hindoo idolatry; and are inclined to inculcate, that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity! If this were indeed the case, I might perhaps be led into some examination of the subject: but the truth is, the Hindoos of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power; and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected and ceremonies performed. There can be no doubt however, and it is my whole design to prove, that every rite has its derivation from the allegorical adoration of the true Deity; but at the present day all this is forgotten, and among many it is even heresy to mention it!

I hope it will not be presumed that I intend to establish the preference of my faith over that of other men. The result of controversy on such a subject, however multiplied, must be ever unsatisfactory; for the reasoning faculty, which leads men to certainty in things within its reach, produces no effect on questions beyond its comprehension. I do no more than assert. that if correct reasoning and the dictates of common sense induce the belief of a wise, uncreated Being, who is the Snpporter and Ruler of the boundless universe, we should also consider him the most powerful and supreme Existence,—far surpassing our powers of comprehension or description. And, although men of *uncultivated* minds. and even some *learned* individuals, (but in this one point blinded by *prejudice*,) readily choose, as the object of their adoration, anything which they can always see, and which they pretend to *feel*; the absurdity of such conduct is not thereby in the least degree diminished.

My constant reflections on the inconvenient, or rather injurious rites introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindoo idolatry which, more than any other pagan worship, destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error: and by making them acquainted with their scriptures, enable them to contemplate with true devotion the unity and omnipresence of Nature's God.

By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahman, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice—perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly!

ABRIDGMENT

OF

THE VEDANTA.

The illustrious Vyasa,* in his celebrated work, the Vedanta, insinuates in the first text, that it is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the subject of discourse in all the Vedas, and the Vedanta, as well as in the other systems of Theology. But he found, from the following passages of the Vedas, that this inquiry is limited to very narrow bounds, *viz.*, "The Supreme Being is not comprehensible by vision, "or by any other of the organs of sense; nor can he be conceived by "means of devotion, or virtuous practices." † "He sees everything, "though never seen; hears everything, though never directly heard "of. He is neither short, nor is he long;‡ inaccessible to the reason-"ing faculty; not to be compassed by description; beyond the limits "of the explanation of the Veda, or of human conception!"§ Vyasa, also, from the result of various arguments coinciding with the Veda, found that the accurate and positive knowledge of the Supreme Being is not within the boundary of comprehension; *i.e.* that *what*, and *how*, the Supreme Being is, cannot be definitely ascertained. He has, therefore, in the second text, explained the Supreme Being by his effects and works, without attempting to define his essence; in like manner as we, not knowing the real nature of the sun, explain him to be the cause of the succession of days and epochs. "He by whom "the birth, existence, and annihilation of the world is regulated, is the "Supreme Being." We see the multifarious, wonderful universe, as well as the birth, existence, and annihilation of its different parts; hence, we naturally infer the existence of a Being who regulates the whole, and call him the Supreme: in the same manner as from the

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* The greatest of the Indian theologists, philosophers, and poets, was begotten by the celebrated Parasara and Satyavati. Vyasa collected and divided the Vedas into certain books and chapters. He is therefore commonly called Veda Vyasa. The word Vyasa is composed of the preposition *vi* and the verb *as* to divide.

† Mundaka. ‡ Brihadaranyaka. § Kathavalli.

sight of a pot we conclude the existence of its artificer. The Veda, in like manner, declares the Supreme Being thus: "He from whom "the universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the Universe, and "whose work is the universe, is the Supreme Being."*

The *Veda* is not supposed to be an eternal Being, though sometimes dignified with such an epithet; because its being created by the Supreme Being is declared in the same Veda thus: "All the texts "and parts of the Veda were created:" and also in the third text of the Vedanta, God is declared to be the cause of all the Vedas.

The *void Space* is not conceived to be the independent cause of the world, notwithstanding the following declaration of the Veda, "The world proceeds from the void space;"† for the Veda again declares, "By the Supreme Being the void space was produced." And the Vedanta‡ says: "As the Supreme Being is evidently "declared in the Veda to be the cause of the void Space, Air, and "Fire, neither of them can be supposed to be the independent cause of "the universe."

Neither is *Air* allowed to be the Lord of the Universe, although the Veda says in one instance, "In air every existing creature is "absorbed;" for the Veda again affirms, that "Breath, the intellectual "power, all the internal and external senses, the void Space, Air, "Light, Water, and the extensive Earth, proceeded from the Supreme "Being!" The Vedanta§ also says: "God is meant by the following "text of the Veda, as a Being more extensive than all the extension of "Space;" *viz.* "*That* breath is greater than the extension of Space in "all directions," as it occurs in the Veda, after the discourse concerning common breath is concluded.

Light, of whatever description, is not inferred to be the Lord of the Universe, from the following assertion of the Veda: "The pure Light of all lights is the Lord of all creatures;" for the Veda again declares,|| that "The sun and all others imitate God, and borrow their "light from him;" and the same declaration is found in the Vedanta.¶

Neither can *Nature* be construed by the following texts of the Veda, to be the independent cause of the world: *viz.*, Man "having "known *that* Nature which is an eternal being, without a beginning or "an end, is delivered from the grasp of death," and "Nature operates

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* Taittiriya.
† Chhandogya.
‡ Fourteenth text, 4th sec. 1st chap.
§ 8th, 3rd, 1st.
|| Mundaka.
¶ 22nd, 3rd, 1st.

"herself," because the Veda affirms that "No being is superior or "equal to God,"* and the Veda commands, "Know God alone."† and the Vedanta‡ thus declares: "Nature is not the Creator of the world "not being represented so by the Veda," for it expressly says, "God "has by his sight created the Universe." Nature is an insensible Being, she is, therefore, void of sight or intention, and consequently unable to create the regular world.§

Atoms are not supposed to be the cause of the world, notwithstanding the following declaration: "This (Creator) is the most minute "Being." Because an atom is an insensible particle, and from the above authority it is proved, that no Being void of understanding can be the author of a system so skilfully arranged.

The soul cannot be inferred from the following texts to be the Lord of the Universe, nor the independent Ruler of the intellectual powers; *viz.*, "The Soul being joined to the resplendent Being, "enjoys by itself," "God and the soul enter the small void space of the "heart"; because the Veda declares that "He (God) resides in the soul "as its Ruler," and that "The soul being joined to the gracious Being, "enjoys happiness."|| The Vedanta also says, "The sentient soul is "not understood to reside as ruler in the earth, because in both texts "of the Veda it is differently declared from that Being who rules the "earth:" *viz.*, "He (God) resides in the faculty of the understanding," and "He, who resides in the soul, &c."

No *god* or *goddess of the earth* can be meant by the following text as the ruler of the earth, *viz.*¶ "He who resides in the earth, and "is distinct from the earth, and whom the earth does not know," &c.: because the Veda affirms that, "This (God alone) is the ruler of "internal sense, and is the eternal Being;" and the same is asserted in the Vedanta.**

By the text which begins with the following sentence: *viz.* "This "is the sun," and by several other texts testifying the dignity of the sun, he is not supposed to be the original cause of the universe, because the Veda declares, that †† "He who resides in the sun (as his "Lord) is distinct from the sun," and the Vedanta declares the same.‡‡

In like manner none of the celestial gods can be inferred from the various assertions of the Veda respecting their deities respectively, to be the independent cause of the Universe; because the Veda

* Katha. † Mundaka. ‡ 5th, 1st, 1st.
§ Katha. || 20th, 2d, 1st. ¶ Brihadaranyaka.
** 18th, 2d, 1st. †† Brihadaranyaka. ‡‡ 21st, 1st, 1st.

repeatedly affirms, that "All the Vedas prove nothing but the unity "of the Supreme Being." By allowing the divinity of more than one Being, the following positive affirmations of the Veda, relative to the unity of God, become false and absurd: "God is indeed one and has "no second."* "There is none but the Supreme Being possessed of "universal knowledge."† "He who is without any figure, and beyond "the limit of description, is the Supreme Being."‡ "Appellations "and figures of all kinds are innovations." And from the authority of many other texts it is evident that any being that bears figure, and is subject to description, cannot be the eternal, independent cause of the universe.

The Vedas not only call the celestial representations deities, but also in many instances give the divine epithet to the mind, diet, void space, quadruped animals, slaves, and flymen: as, "The Supreme "Being is a quadruped animal in one place, and in another he is full of "glory. The mind is the Supreme Being, it is to be worshipped." "God is the letter 'ka' as well as 'kha,' and God is in the shape of "slaves and that of flymen." The Veda has allegorically represented God in the figure of the Universe, *viz.*, "Fire" is his head, the sun and the moon are his "two eyes,"§ &c. And also the Veda calls God the void space of the heart, and declares him to be smaller than the grain of paddy and barley: but from the foregoing quotations neither any of the celestial gods, nor any existing creature, should be considered the Lord of the Universe, because|| the third chapter of the Vedanta explains the reason for these secondary assertions thus: "By these appellations of the Veda, which denote the "diffusive spirit of the Supreme Being equally over all creatures by "means of extension, his omnipresence is established:" so the Veda says, "All that exists is indeed God."¶ *i. e.*, nothing bears true existence excepting God, "and whatever we smell or taste is the "Supreme Being," *i. e.*, the existence of whatever thing that appears to us, relies on the existence of God. It is indisputably evident that none of these metaphorical representations, which arise from the elevated style in which all the Vedas are written, were designed to be viewed in any other light than mere allegory. Should individuals be acknowledged to be separate deities, there would be a necessity for acknowledging many independent creators of

* Katha. † Brihadaranyaka. ‡ Chhandogya.
§ Mundaka. || 38th text, 2d sec. ¶ Chhandogya.

the world, which is directly contrary to common sense, and to the repeated authority of the Veda. The Vedanta* also declares, "That "Being which is distinct from matter, and from those which are "contained in matter, is not various because he is declared by all "the Vedas to be one beyond description;" and it is again stated that "The Veda has declared the Supreme Being to be mere under-"standing:" † also in the third chapter is found that, "The Veda "having at first explained the Supreme Being by different epithets, "begins with the word *Atha* or now," and declares that, "All descrip-"tions which I have used to describe the Supreme Being are in-"correct," because he by no means can be described; and so is it stated in the sacred commentaries of the Veda.

The fourteenth text of the second section of the third chapter of the Vedanta declares, "It being directly represented by the Veda, "that the Supreme Being bears no figure nor form;" and the following texts of the Veda assert the same, *viz.*, "The true Being was before "all."‡ "The Supreme Being has no feet, but extends everywhere; has "no hands, yet holds everything; has no eyes, yet sees all that "is; has no ears, yet hears everything that passes." "His existence "had no cause." "He is the smallest of the small, and the greatest of "the great: and yet is, in fact, neither small nor great."

In answer to the following questions, *viz.*, "How can the Supreme Being be supposed to be distinct from, and above all existing creatures, and at the same time omnipresent? How is it possible that he should be described by properties inconceivable by reason, as seeing without eye, and hearing without ear?" To these questions the Vedanta in chapter second, replies, "In God are all sorts of "power and splendour." And the following passages of the Veda also declare the same: "God is all-powerful;"§ and "It is by his "supremacy that he is in possession of all powers;" *i.e.*, what may be impossible for us is not impossible for God, who is the Almighty, and the sole Regulator of the Universe.

Some celestial gods have, in different instances, declared themselves to be independent deities, and also the object of worship; but these declarations were owing to their thoughts being abstracted from themselves and their being entirely absorbed in divine reflection. The Vedanta declares: "This exhortation of Indra (or the god of the "atmosphere) respecting his divinity, to be indeed agreeable to the

* 11th 2d, 3d. † 16th, 2d, 3d. ‡ Chhandogya. § Svetasvatara.

"authorities of the Veda;" that is, "Every one, on having lost all self-"consideration in consequence of being united with divine reflection, "may speak as assuming to be the Supreme Being; like Vamadeva (a "celebrated Brahman) who, in consequence of such self-forgetfulness, "declared himself to have created the sun, and Manu, the next person "to Brahma." It is therefore optional with every one of the celestial gods, as well as with every individual, to consider himself as God, under this state of self-forgetfulness and unity with the Divine reflection, as the Veda says, "You are that true Being" (when you lose all self-consideration), and "O God, I am nothing but you." The sacred commentators have made the same observation, *viz.*, "I am nothing but "true Being, and am pure Understanding, full of eternal happiness, "and am by nature free from worldly effects." But in consequence of this reflection, none of them can be acknowledged to be the cause of the universe or the object of adoration.

God is the efficient cause of the universe, as a potter is of earthen pots; and he is also the material cause of it, the same as the earth is the material cause of the different earthen pots, or as a rope, at an inadvertent view taken for a snake, is the material cause of the conceived existence of the snake, which appears to be true by the support of the real existence of the rope. So says the Vedanta,† "God is the efficient cause of the Universe, as well as the material "cause thereof (as a spider of its web)," as the Veda has positively declared, "That from a knowledge of God alone, a knowledge of "every existing thing proceeds." Also the Veda compares the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being to a knowledge of the earth, and the knowledge respecting the different species existing in the universe to the knowledge of earthen pots, which declaration and comparison prove the unity between the Supreme Being and the universe; and by the following declarations of the Veda, *viz.*, "The Supreme Being "has by his sole intention created the Universe," it is evident that God is the wilful agent of all that can have existence.

As the Veda says that the Supreme Being intended (at the time of creation) to extend himself, it is evident that the Supreme Being is the origin of all matter, and its various appearances; as the reflection of the sun's meridian rays on sandy plains is the cause of the resemblance of an extended sea. The Veda says, that "All figures and "their appellations are mere inventions, and that the Supreme Being

* 30th, 1st, 1st. † 23d, 8th, 1st.

"alone is real existence," consequently things that bear figure and appellation cannot be supposed the cause of the universe.

The following texts of the Veda, *viz.*, "Krishna (the god of preserva- "tion) is greater than all the celestial gods, to whom the mind should "be applied." "We all worship Mahadeva (the god of destruction)." "We adore the sun." "I worship the most revered Varuna (the god "of the sea)." "Dost thou worship me," says the Air, "who am the "eternal and universal life." "Intellectual power is God, which "should be adored;" and Udgitha (or a certain part of the Veda) should "be worshipped." These, as well as several other texts of the same nature are not real commands to worship the persons and things above-mentioned, but only direct those who are unfortunately incapable of adoring the invisible Supreme Being, to apply their minds to any visible thing rather than allow them to remain idle. The Vedanta states, that "The declaration of the Veda,* that those who worship also "the celestial gods are the food of such gods," is an allegorical expression, and only means that they are comforts to the celestial gods, as food is to mankind; for he who has no faith in the Supreme Being is rendered subject to these gods. The Veda affirms the same: *viz*,. "He who worships any god excepting the Supreme Being, and "thinks that he is distinct and inferior to that god, knows nothing, and "is considered as a domestic beast of these gods." And the Vedanta also asserts; *viz.*, "The worship authorized by all the Vedas is of one nature, as the direction for the worship of the only Supreme Being is invariably found in every part of the Veda; and the epithets the 'Supreme and the Omnipresent Being,' &c. commonly imply "God "alone."†

The following passages of the Veda affirm that God is the sole object of worship, *viz.* ‡ "Adore God alone." "Know God alone; "give up all other discourse." And the Vedanta says, that "It is found "in the Vedas,§ 'That none but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped. "nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man.'"

Moreover, the Vedanta declares that "Vyasa is of opinion that the "adoration of the Supreme Being is required of mankind as well as of "the celestial gods; because the possibility of self-resignation to God "is equally observed in both mankind and the celestial deities."|| The Veda also states,¶ that "Of the celestial gods, of the pious Brahmans,

* 7th, 1st 3rd. † 1st, 3d, 3d. ‡ Brihadaranyaka
§ 67th, 3d, 3d. || 26th, 3d, 1st. ¶ Brihadaranyaka.

"and of men in general, that person who understands and believes "the Almighty Being, will be absorbed in him." It is therefore concluded that the celestial gods and mankind have an equal duty in divine worship; and besides it is proved from the following authority of the Veda, that any man who adores the Supreme Being is adored by all the celestial gods, *viz.* "All the celestial gods worship him "who applies his mind to the Supreme Being."*

The Veda now illustrates the mode in which we should worship the Supreme Being, *viz.* "To God we should approach, of him "we should hear, of him we should think, and to him we should "attempt to approximate." † The Vedanta also elucidates the subject thus: "The three latter directions in the above quoted text, are "conducive to the first, *viz.*, 'Approaching to God'." These three are in reality included in the first (as the direction for collecting fire in the worship of fire), for we cannot approach to God without hearing and thinking of him, nor without attempting to make our approximation; and the last, *viz.*, attempting to approximate to God, is required until we have approached him. By hearing of God is meant hearing his declarations, which establish his unity; and by thinking of him is meant thinking of the contents of his law; and by attempting to approximate to him is meant attempting to apply our minds to that true Being on which the diffusive existence of the universe relies, in order that by means of the constant practice of this attempt we may approach to him. The Vedanta states, ‡ that "Constant practice of "devotion is necessary, it being represented so by the Veda;" and also adds that "We should adore God till we approach to him, and even "then not forsake his adoration, such authority being found in the "Veda."

The Vedanta shows that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God, *viz.*, "A command over our passions and over the external "senses of the body and good acts, are declared by the Veda to be "indispensable in the mind's approximation to God, they should "therefore be strictly taken care of, and attended to, both previously "and subsequently to such approximation to the Supreme Being;"§ *i. e.* we should not indulge our evil propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control over them. Reliance on, and self-resignation to, the only true Being, with an aversion to worldly considerations, are included in the good acts above alluded to. The adoration of the

* Chhandogya. † 47th, 4th, 3d. ‡ 1st, 1st, 4th. § 27th, 4th, 3rd.

Supreme Being produces eternal beatitude, as well as all desired advantages; as the Vedanta declares: "It is the firm opinion of "Vyasa that from devotion to God all the desired consequences "proceed;" * and it is thus often represented by the Veda, "He who "is desirous of prosperity should worship the Supreme Being." † "He "who knows God thoroughly adheres unto God." "The souls of the "deceased forefathers of him who adores the true Being alone, "enjoy freedom by his mere wish." ‡ "All the celestial gods "worship him who applies his mind to the Supreme Being;" and "He who sincerely adores the Supreme Being, is exempted from "further transmigration."

A pious householder is entitled to the adoration of God equally with an Yati§; The Vedanta says, that "A householder may be "allowed the performance of all the ceremonies attached to the "(Brahmanical) religion, and also the fulfilling of the devotion of God: "the fore-mentioned mode of worshipping the Supreme Being, there-"fore, is required of a householder possessed of moral 'principles,'"‖ And the Veda declares, that "the celestial gods, and householders of "strong faith, and professional Yatis, are alike."

It is optional to those who have faith in God alone, to observe and attend to the rules and rites prescribed by the Veda applicable to the different classes of Hindoos, and to their different religious orders respectively. But in case of the true believers neglecting those rites they are not liable to any blame whatever; as the Vedanta says, "Before acquiring the true knowledge of God, it is proper for man "to attend to the laws and rules laid down by the Veda for different "classes, according to their different professions because the Veda "declares the performance of these rules to be the cause of the "mind's purification, and its faith in God, and compares it with a "saddle-horse, which helps a man to arrive at the wished-for goal."¶ And the Vedanta also says, that "Man may acquire the true know-"ledge of God even without observing the rules and rites prescribed "by the Veda for each class of Hindoos, as it is found in the Veda that "many persons who had neglected the performance of the Brahmanical "rites and ceremonies owing to their perpetual attention to the

* 1st. 4th. 3rd. † Mundaka. ‡ Chhandogya.

§ The highest among the four sects of Brahmans, who, according to the religious order, are bound to forsake all worldly considerations, and to spend their time in the sole adoration of God.

‖ 28th. 4th. 3d. ¶ 36th. 4th. 3d.

"adoration of the Supreme Being, acquired the true knowledge "respecting the Deity."* The Vedanta again more clearly states that, "It is equally found in the Veda that some people, though they had "their entire faith in God alone, yet performed both the worship of "God and the ceremonies prescribed by the Veda; and that some "others neglected them, and merely worshipped God."† The following texts of the Veda fully explain the subject, *viz.*, "Janaka "(one of the noted devotees) had performed Yajna (or the adoration "of the celestial gods through fire) with the gift of a considerable "sum of money, as a fee to the holy Brahmans, and many learned true "believers never worshipped fire, nor any celestial god through fire."

Notwithstanding it is optional with those who have their faith in the only God, to attend to the prescribed ceremonies or to neglect them entirely, the Vedanta prefers the former to the latter, because the Veda says that attendance to the religious ceremonies conduces to the attainment of the Supreme Being.

Although the Veda says, "That he who has true faith in the "omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all that exists,"‡ *i.e.*, is not bound to enquire what is his food, or who prepares it, nevertheless the Vedanta limits that authority thus: "The above-mentioned autho-"rity of the Veda for eating all sorts of food should only be observed "at the time of distress, because it is found in the Veda, that "Chakrayana (a celebrated Brahman) ate the meat cooked by the "elephant-keepers during a famine."§ It is concluded, that he acted according to the above stated authority of the Veda, only at the time of distress.

Devotion to the Supreme Being is not limited to any holy place or sacred country, as the Vedanta says, "In any place wherein the "mind feels itself undisturbed, men should worship God; because "no specific authority for the choice of any particular place of worship "is found in the Veda,"‖ which declares, "In any place which renders "the mind easy, man should adore God."

It is of no consequence to those who have true belief in God whether they die while the sun is in the north or south of the equator, as the Vedanta declares that "Any one who has faith in the only "God, dying even when the sun may be south of the equator, ¶ his

* 36th, 4th, 3d. †9th, 4th, 3d. ‡Chhandogya. §28th, 4th, 3d. ‖11th, 1st, 4th

¶ It is believed by the Brahmans, that any one who dies while the sun is south of the equator, cannot enjoy eternal beatitude.

"soul shall proceed from the body, through Sushumna (a vein which, "as the Brahmans suppose, passes through the navel up to the brain), "and approaches to the Supreme Being.*" The Veda also positively asserts that "He who in life was devoted to the Supreme Being, "shall (after death) be absorbed in him, and again be neither liable "to birth nor death, reduction nor augmentation."

The Veda begins and concludes with the three peculiar and mysterious epithets of God, *viz*, first, OM; second, TAT; third, SAT. The first of these signifies, "*That* Being which preserves, destroys and creates." The second implies "*That* only Being which is neither "male or female." The third announces "*The true Being*." These collective terms simply affirm, that ONE UNKNOWN, TRUE BEING IS THE CREATOR, PRESERVER, AND DESTROYER OF THE UNIVERSE!

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* 20th, 2d, 4th.

TRANSLATION

OF THE

MOONDUK OPUNISHUD

OF THE

UTHURVU-VED,

ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED

SHUNKURACHARYU.

CALCUTTA:

1819.

INTRODUCTION.

DURING the intervals between my controversial engagements with idolaters as well as with advocates of idolatry, I translated several of the ten Upanishads, of which the Vedanta or principal part of the Vedas consists, and of which the Sariraka-Mimansa, commonly called the Vedanta-Darsana, composed by the celebrated Vyasa, is explanatory; I have now taken the opportunity of further leisure to publish a translation of the Mundaka-Upanishad. An attentive perusal of this as well as of the remaining books of the Vedanta will, I trust, convince every unprejudiced mind, that they, with great consistency, inculcate the unity of God; instructing men, at the same time, in the pure mode of adoring him in spirit. It will also appear evident that the Vedas, although they tolerate idolatry as the last provision for those who are totally incapable of raising their minds to the contemplation of the invisible God of nature, yet repeatedly urge the relinquishment of the rites of idol-worship, and the adoption of a purer system of religion, on the express ground that the observance of idolatrous rites can never be productive of eternal beatitude. These are left to be practised by such persons only as, notwithstanding the constant teaching of spiritual guides, cannot be brought to see perspicuously the majesty of God through the works of nature.

The public will, I hope, be assured that nothing but the natural inclination of the ignorant towards the worship of objects resembling their own nature, and to the external forms of rites palpable to their grosser senses, joined to the self-interested motives of their pretended guides, has rendered the generality of the Hindoo community (in defiance of their sacred books) devoted to idol-worship,—the source of prejudice and superstition and of the total destruction of moral principle, as countenancing criminal intercourse,* suicide,† female murder,‡ and human sacrifice. Should my labours prove in any degree the means of diminishing the extent of those evils, I shall ever deem myself most amply rewarded.

* *Vide* Defence of Hindoo Theism.
† *Vide* Introduction to the Kena-Upanishad.
‡ *Vide* Treatise on Widow-burning.

THE

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

OF THE

ATHARVA-VEDA.

Brahma, the greatest of celestial deities, and executive creator and preserver of the world, came into form; he instructed Atharva, his eldest son, in the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, on which all sciences rest. Atharva communicated formerly to Angira what Brahma taught him: Angira imparted the same knowledge to one of the descendants of Bharadwaja, *called* Satyavaha, who conveyed the doctrine so handed down to Angiras. Saunaka, a wealthy householder, having in the prescribed manner approached Angiras, asked, Is there any being by whose knowledge alone the whole universe may be *immediately* known? He (Angiras) then replied: Those who have a thorough knowledge of the Vedas, say that it should be understood that there are two sorts of knowledge, one superior, and the other inferior. There are the Rig-veda, Ya-jur-veda, Samaveda, and Atharva-veda, and also *their subordinate parts, consisting of* Siksha or a treatise on pronunciation, Kalpa or the science that teaches the details of rites according to the different branches of the Vedas, Vyakarana or grammar, Nirukta or explanation of the Vedas, Ch'handas or prosody, and Jyotisha or astronomy: *which all* belong to the inferior kind of knowledge. Now the superior kind *is conveyed by the Upanishads and* is that through which absorption into the eternal Supreme Being may be obtained. That Supreme Being, *who is the subject of the superior learning*, is beyond the apprehension of the senses, and out of the reach of the corporeal organs of action, and is without origin, colour, or magnitude, and has neither eye nor ear, nor has he hand or foot. He is everlasting, all-pervading, omnipresent, absolutely incorporeal, unchangeable, and it is he whom wise men consider as the origin of the universe. In the same way as the cobweb is created and absorbed by the spider *independently of exterior origin*, as vegetables proceed from the earth, and hair and nails from animate creatures, so the Universe is produced by the eternal Supreme Being.

From his omniscience the Supreme Being resolves to create the Universe. Then nature, *the apparent cause of the world*, is produced by him. From her the prior operating sensitive particle of the world, styled Brahma, the source of the faculties, proceeds. *From the faculties* the five elements *are produced*; *thence spring the seven* divisions of the world, whereon ceremonial rites, with their consequences, are brought forth. By him who knows all things, collectively and distinctly, whose knowledge and will are the only means of all his actions, Brahma, name, and form, and all that vegetates are produced.

End of the first Section of the 1st Mundakam.

Those rites,* the prescription of which wise men, *such as Vasishtha, and others* found in the Vedas, are truly the means *of producing good consequences*. They have been performed in various manners by three sects among Brahmans, *namely, Adhvaryu, or those who are well versed in the Yajur-veda*; *Udgata, or the sect who know thoroughly the Sama-veda*; *and Hota, those Brahmans that have a perfect knowledge of the Rig-veda.* You all continue to perform them, as long as you feel a desire to enjoy gratifications attainable from them. This practice of performing rites is the way which leads you to the benefits you expect to derive from your works.

Fire being augmented when its flame waves, *the observer of rites* shall offer oblations to deities in the middle of the waving flame.

If observance of the sacred fire be not attended with the rites required to be performed on the days of new and full moon, and during the four months of the rains, and in the autumn and spring; and be also not attended with hospitality and due regard to time or the worship of Vaiswadeva, and be fulfilled without regard to prescribed forms, it will deprive the worshipper of the enjoyments which he might otherwise expect in his seven future mansions.

Kali, Karali, Manojava, Sulohitá, Sudhumravarná, Sphulingini, Viswaruchi, are the *seven names of the* seven waving points of the flame.

He who offers oblations at the prescribed time in those illuminating and waving points of fire, is carried by the oblations so offered

* In the beginning of this section, the author treats of the subject of the inferior knowledge; and in the conclusion he introduces that of the superior doctrine, which he continues throughout the whole Upanishad.

through the rays of the Sun to the Heaven where Indra, prince of the celestial gods, reigns. The illuminating oblations, while carrying the observer of rites through the rays of the Sun, *invite him* to heaven, *saying*, "Come in! come in!" and entertaining him with pleasing conversation, and treating him with veneration, say to him, "This is the summit of the heavens, the fruit of your good works."

The eighteen members of rites and sacrifices, *void of the true knowledge*, are infirm and perishable. Those ignorant persons who consider them as the source of real bliss, shall, after the enjoyment of future gratification, undergo transmigrations. Those fools who, immersed in ignorance, *that is, the foolish practice of rites*, consider themselves to be wise and learned, wander about, repeatedly subjecting themselves to *birth, disease, death and other* pains, like blind men when guided by a blind *man*.

Engaged in various manners of rites and sacrifices, the ignorant are sure of obtaining their objects : but as the observers of such rites, from their excessive desire of fruition, remain destitute of a knowledge of God, they, afflicted with sorrows, descend to this world after the time of their celestial gratification is expired. Those complete fools believe, that the rites prescribed by the Vedas in performing sacrifices, and those laid down by the Smritis at the digging of wells and other pious liberal actions, are the most beneficial, and have no idea that a knowledge *of, and faith in God*, are the only true sources of bliss. They, after death, having enjoyed the consequence of such rites on the summit of heaven, transmigrate in the human form, or in that of inferior animals, or of plants.

Mendicants and hermits, who residing in forests, live upon alms, as well as *householders* possessed of a portion of wisdom, practising religious austerities, the worship of Brahma and others, and exercising a control over the senses, freed from sins, ascend through the northern path[*] to the highest part of heaven, where the immortal Brahma, who is coeval with the world, assumes *his supremacy*.

Having taken into serious consideration the perishable nature of all objects *within the world*, which are acquirable from human works, a Brahman shall cease to desire them ; reflecting within

[*] According to the Hindu theologians, there are two roads that lead to distinct heavens, one northern, the other, southern. The former is the path to the habitation of Brahma and the superior gods, and the latter to the heaven of Indra and the other inferior deities.

himself, that nothing *which is obtained through perishable means* can be expected to be eternal : hence what use of rites? He then, with a view to acquire a knowledge of superior learning, shall proceed, with a load of wood in his hand, to a spiritual teacher who is versed in the doctrines of the Vedas and has firm faith in God. The wise teacher shall properly instruct his pupil so devoted to him, freed from the importunities of external senses, and possessed of tranquillity of mind, in the knowledge through which he may know the eternal Supreme Being.

End of the first Mundakam.

He, *the subject of the superior knowledge*, alone is true. As from a blazing fire thousands of sparks of the same nature proceed, so from the eternal Supreme Being (O beloved pupil) various souls come forth, and again they return into him. He is immortal and without form or figure, omnipresent, pervading external and internal objects, unborn, without breath or individual mind, pure and superior to eminently exalted nature.

From him the first sensitive particle, or the seed of the universe, individual intellect, all the senses and their *objects*, also vacuum, air, light, water, and the earth which contains all things, proceed.

Heaven is his head, and the sun and moon are his eyes ; space is his ears, the celebrated Vedas are his speech ; air is his breath, the world is his intellect, and the earth is his feet ; *for* he is the soul of the whole universe.

By him the sky, which is illuminated by the sun, *is produced*; clouds, which have their origin from the effects of the moon, *accumulating them in the sky*, bring forth vegetables in the earth ; man imparts the essence *drawn from these vegetables*, to woman ; *then through the combination of such physical causes*, numerous offspring come forth from the omnipresent Supreme Being.

From him all the texts of the Vedas, consisting of verses, musical compositions, and prose, proceed ; *in like manner by him* are produced Diksha or certain preliminary ceremonies, and sacrifices, without sacrificial posts or with them ; *fees* lastly offered in sacrifices, time, and the principal person who institutes the performance of sacrifices and defrays their expenses ; as well as future mansions, where the moon effects purification and where the sun *shines*. By him gods of

several descriptions, all celestial beings subordinate to those gods, mankind, animals, birds, both breath and peditum, wheat and barley, austerity, conviction, truth, duties of ascetics, and *rules* for conducting human life, were created. From him seven individual senses within the head proceed, as well as their seven respective inclinations towards their objects, their seven objects, and ideas acquired through them, and their seven organs (*two eyes, two ears, the two passages of nose and mouth*), in which those senses are situated in every living creature, and which never cease to act except at the time of sleep.

From him, oceans and all mountains proceed, and various rivers flow : all vegetables, tastes, (*consisting of sweet, salt, pungent, bitter, sour, and astringent*) united with which the visible elementary substance encloses the corpuscle situate in the heart.* The Supreme existence is himself all—rites as well as their rewards. He therefore is the Supreme and Immortal. He who knows him (O beloved pupil) as residing in the hearts *of all animate beings*, disentangles the knot of ignorance in this world.

End of the first section of the 2nd Mundakam.

God, as being resplendent and most proximate *to all creatures*, is styled the operator in the heart; he is great and all-sustaining; for on him rest all existences, such as those that move, those that breathe, those that twinkle, and those that do not. Such is God. You all contemplate him as the support of all objects, visible and invisible, the chief *end of human pursuit*. He surpasses all human understanding, and is the most pre-eminent. He, who irradiates *the sun and other bodies*, who is smaller than an atom, larger *than the world*, and in whom is the abode of all the divisions of the universe, and of all their inhabitants, is the eternal God, the origin of breath, speech, and intellect, as well *as of all the senses*. He, *the origin of all the senses*, the true and unchangeable Supreme Being, should be meditated upon; and do thou (O beloved pupil) apply constantly thy mind to him. Seizing the bow found in the Upanishads, the strongest of weapons, man shall draw the arrow (*of the soul*), sharpened by the constant application of mind *to God*. Do thou (O pupil),

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* This corpuscle is supposed to be constituted of all the various elements that enter into the composition of the animal frame. Within it the soul has its residence, and acting upon it, operates through its medium in the whole system. To this corpuscle the soul remains attached through all changes of being, until finally absorbed into the Supreme Intelligence.

being in the same practice, withdrawing all *the senses from worldly objects*, through the mind directed towards the Supreme Being, hit the mark which is the eternal God. The word Om, *signifying God*, is represented as the bow, the soul as the arrow, and the Supreme Being as its aim, which a man of steady mind should hit: he then shall be united to God as the arrow to its mark. In God, heaven, earth, and space reside, and also intellect, with breath and all the senses. Do you strive to know solely the ONE Supreme Being, and forsake all other discourse; because this (*a true knowledge respecting God*) is the only way to eternal beautitude. The veins of the body are inserted into the heart, like the radius of a wheel into its nave. There the Supreme Being, as the origin of the notion of individuality, and of its various circumstances, resides; Him, through the help of Om, you will contemplate. Blessed be ye in crossing over the ocean of dark ignorance to absorption into God. He who knows the universe collectively, distinctively, whose majesty is fully evident in the world, operates within the space of the heart, his luminous abode.

He is perceptible only by intellect; and removes the breath and corpuscle, *in which the soul resides*, from one substance to another: supporting intellectual faculties, he is seated in the heart. Wise men acquire a knowledge of him, who shines eternal, and the source of all happiness, through the pure knowledge *conveyed to them by the Vedas and by spiritual fathers*. God, who is All-in-all, being known to man as the origin of intellect and self-consciousness, every desire of the mind ceases, all doubts are removed, and the effects of the good or evil actions committed, now or in preceding shapes, are totally annihilated. The Supreme Being, free from stain, devoid of figure or form, and entirely pure, the light of all lights, resides in the heart, his resplendently excellent seat: those *discriminating* men, who know him *as the origin of intellect and of self-consciousness*, are possessed of the real notion of God. Neither the sun nor the moon, nor yet the stars, can throw light on God: even the illuminating lightning cannot throw light upon him, much less can limited fire give him light: but they all imitate him, and all borrow their light from him. God alone is immortal: he extends before, behind, to the right, to the left, beneath and above. He is the Supreme, and All-in-all.

End of the Second Mundakam.

Two birds (*meaning God and the soul*) cohabitant and co-essential, reside unitedly in one tree, *which is the body*. One of them (*the soul*) consumes the variously tasted fruits of its actions; but the other (God), without partaking of them, witnesses *all events*.

The soul so pressed down in the body, being deluded with ignorance, grieves at its own insufficiency; but when it perceives its cohabitant, the adorable Lord *of the Universe*,* the origin of itself, and his glory, it feels relieved from grief and infatuation. When a wise man perceives the resplendent God, the Creator and Lord *of the Universe* and the omnipresent prime Cause, he then, abandoning the consequences of good and evil works, becomes perfect, and obtains entire absorption. A wise man knowing God as perspicuously residing in all creatures, forsakes all idea of duality; *being convinced that there is only one real Existence, which is God.* He then directs all his senses towards God alone, the origin of self-consciousness, and on him exclusively he places his love, abstracting at the same time his mind from all worldly objects by constantly applying it to God: the person so devoted is reckoned the most perfect among the votaries of the Deity. Through strict veracity, the uniform direction of mind and senses, and through notions acquired from spiritual teachers, as well as by abstinence from sexual indulgence, man should approach God, who full of splendour and perfection, works in the heart; and to whom only the votaries freed from passion and desire can approximate.

He who practises veracity prospers, and not he who speaks untruths: the way to eternal beatitude is open to him who without omission speaketh truth. This is that way through which the saints, extricated from all desires, proceed to the Supreme Existence, the consequence of the observance of truth. He is great and incomprehensible by the senses, and consequently his nature is beyond human conception. He, though more subtle than vacuum itself, shines in various ways.—*From those who do not know him*, he is at a greater distance than the limits of space, and *to those who acquire a knowledge of him*, he is most proximate; and while residing in animate creatures, he is perceived obscurely *by those who apply*

* The difference between God, the intellectual principle, and the soul, the individual intellect, subsists as long as the idea of self-individuality is retained; like the distinction between finite and infinite space, which ceases as soon as the idea of particular figure is done away.

their thoughts to him. He is not perceptible by vision, nor is he describable by means of speech: neither can he be the object of any of the other organs of sense; nor can he be conceived by the help of austerities or religious rites: but a person whose mind is purified by the light of true knowledge, through incessant contemplation, perceives him, the most pure God. Such is the invisible Supreme Being: he should be observed in the heart, wherein breath, consisting of five species, rests. The mind being perfectly freed from impurity, God, who spreads over the mind and all the senses, imparts a knowledge of himself to the heart.

A pious votary of God obtains whatever division of the world and whatever desirable object he may wish to acquire *for himself or for another:* therefore any one, who is desirous of honour and advantage should revere him.

End of the 1st section of the 3rd Mundakam.

Those wise men who, abandoning all desires, revere the devotee who has acquired a knowledge of the supreme exaltation of God, on whom the whole universe rests, and who is perfect and illuminates everywhere, will never be subjected to further birth.

He who, contemplating the various effects of objects visible or invisible, feels a desire to obtain them, shall be born again with those feelings: but the man satisfied with a knowledge of and faith in God, blessed by a total destruction of ignorance, forsakes all such desires even during his life.

A knowledge of God, *the prime object*, is not acquirable from study of the Vedas, nor through retentive memory, nor yet by continual hearing of spiritual instruction: but he who seeks to obtain a *knowledge* of God is gifted with it, God rendering himself conspicuous to him.

No man *deficient in* faith or discretion can obtain a knowledge of God; nor can even he who possesses wisdom mingled with the desire of fruition, gain it: but the soul of a wise man who, through firm belief, prudence, and pure understanding, not biassed by worldly desire, seeks for knowledge, will be absorbed into God.

The saints who, wise and firm, were satisfied solely with a knowledge of God, assured of the soul's divine origin, exempt from passion, and possessed of tranquillity of mind, having found God the omnipresent everywhere, have after death been absorbed into him; *even*

as limited extension within a jar is by its destruction united to universal space. All the votaries who repose on God alone their firm belief, originating from a knowledge of the Vedanta, and who, by forsaking religious rites, obtain purification of mind, being continually occupied in divine reflections during life, are at the time of death entirely freed from ignorance and absorbed into God. On the approach of death, the elementary parts of their body, being fifteen in number, unite with their respective origins: their corporeal faculties, *such as vision and feeling*, &c., return into their original sources, *the sun and air*, &c. The consequences of their works, together with their souls, are absorbed into the supreme and eternal Spirit, *in the same manner as the reflection of the sun in water returns to him on the removal of the water.* As all rivers flowing into the ocean disappear and lose their respective appellations and forms, so the person who has acquired a knowledge of and faith in God, freeing himself from the subjugation of figure and appellation, is absorbed into the supreme, immaterial and omnipresent Existence.

He who acquires a knowledge of the Supreme Being *according to the foregoing doctrine*, shall inevitably be absorbed into him, *surmounting all the obstacles that he may have to encounter.* None of his progeny will be destitute of a true knowledge of God. He escapes from mental distress and from evil propensities; he is also relieved from the ignorance which occasions the idea of duality. This is the true doctrine inculcated throughout the foregoing texts, and which a man should impart to those who are accustomed to perform good works, conversant in the Vedas, and inclined toward the acquisition of the knowledge of God, and who themselves, with due regard, offer oblations to the sacred fire; and also to those who have continually practised sirobrata, *a certain observance of the sacred fire.* This is the true divine doctrine, in which Angiras instructed *his pupil Saunaka,* which a person not accustomed to devotion should not study.

Salutation to the knowers of God!

TRANSLATION

OF THE

CENA UPANISHAD

ONE OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE

SAMA VEDA;

CCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED

SHANCARACHARYA:

ESTABLISHING THE

UNITY AND THE SOLE OMNIPOTENCE

OF THE SUPREME BEING

AND THAT

HE ALONE

IS THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

CALCUTTA:

1823.

INTRODUCTION.

Since my publication of the abridgment of the *Vedanta*, containing an exposition of all the *Vedas* as given by the great Vyasa, I have, for the purpose of illustrating and confirming the view that he has taken of them, translated into Bengalee the principal chapters of the Vedas as being of unquestionable authority amongst all Hindoos. This work will, I trust, by explaining to my countrymen the real spirit of the Hindoo Scriptures, which is but the declaration of the unity of God, tend in a great degree to correct the erroneous conceptions, which have prevailed with regard to the doctrines they inculcate. It will also, I hope, tend to discriminate those parts of the Vedas which are to be interpreted in an allegorical sense, and consequently to correct those exceptionable practices, which not only deprive Hindoos in general of the common comforts* of society, but also lead them frequently to self-destruction,† or to the sacrifice‡ of the lives of their friends and relations.

It is with no ordinary feeling of satisfaction that I have already seen many respectable persons of my countrymen, to the great disappointment of their interested spiritual guides, rise superior to their original prejudices, and enquire into the truths of religion. As many European gentlemen, especially those who interest themselves in the improvement of their fellow-creatures, may be gratified with a view of the doctrines of the original work, it appeared to me that I might best contribute to that gratification, by translating a few chapters of the Veda into the English language, which I have accordingly done, and now submit them to their candid judgment. Such benevolent people will, perhaps, rise from a perusal of them with the conviction, that in the most ancient times the inhabitants of this part of the globe (at least the

* A Hindoo of caste can only eat once between sunrise and sunset—cannot eat dressed victuals in a boat or ship—nor clothed—nor in a tavern—nor any food that has been touched by a person of a different caste—nor, if interrupted while eating, can he resume his meal.

† As at Prayaga, Ganga Sagar, and under the wheels of the car of Jagannath.

‡ As, for instance, persons whose recovery from sickness is supposed to be doubtful, are carried to die on the banks of the Ganges. This is practised by the Hindoos of Bengal only, the cruelty of which affects even Hindoos of Behar, Ilahabad, and all the upper provinces

more intelligent class) were not unacquainted with metaphysical subjects; that allegorical language or description was very frequently employed to represent the attributes of the Creator, which were sometimes designated as independent existences; and that, however suitable this method might be to the refined understandings of men of learning, it had the most mischievous effect when literature and philosophy decayed, producing all those absurdities and idolatrous notions which have checked, or rather destroyed, every mark of reason, and darkened every beam of understanding.

The Veda from which all Hindoo literature is derived, is, in the opinion of the Hindoos, an inspired work, coeval with the existence of the world. It is divided into four parts, *viz.*, Rik, Yajus, Sama and Atharva; these are again divided into several branches, and these last are sub-divided into chapters. It is the general characteristic of each Veda, that the primary chapters of each branch treat of astronomy, medicine, arms, and other arts and sciences. They also exhibit allegorical representations of the attributes* of the Supreme Being, by means of earthly objects, animate or inanimate, whose shapes or properties are analogous to the nature of those attributes, and pointing out the modes of their worship immediately or through the medium of fire. In the subsequent chapters, the unity of the Supreme Being as the sole ruler of the universe is plainly inculcated, and the mode of worshipping him particularly directed. The doctrine of a plurality of gods and goddesses laid down in the preceding chapters is not only controverted, but reasons assigned for its introduction; for instance, that the worship of the sun and fire, together with the whole allegorical system, were only inculcated for the sake of those whose limited understandings rendered them incapable of comprehending and adoring the invisible Supreme Being, so that such persons might not remain in a brutified state, destitute of all religious principle. Should this explanation given by the Veda itself, as well as by its celebrated commentator Vyasa, not be allowed to reconcile those passages which are seemingly at variance with each other, as those that declare the unity of the invisible Supreme Being, with others which describe a plurality of independent visible gods, the whole work must, I am afraid, not only be stripped of its authority, but be looked upon as altogether unintelligible.

* It is my intention to give, with the blessing of God, in my next publication, an account of the relation betwixt those attributes and the allegorical representations used to denote them.

I have often lamented that, in our general researches into theological truth, we are subjected to the conflict of many obstacles. When we look to the traditions of ancient nations, we often find them at variance with each other; and when, discouraged by this circumstance, we appeal to reason as a surer guide, we soon find how incompetent it is, alone, to conduct us to the object of our pursuit. We often find that, instead of facilitating our endeavours or clearing up our perplexities, it only serves to generate a universal doubt, incompatible with principles on which our comfort and happiness mainly depend. The best method perhaps is, neither to give ourselves up exclusively to the guidance of the one or the other; but by a proper use of the lights furnished by both, endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties, relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power, which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestlv and diligently eek for.

THE

KENA UPANISHAD

OF THE

SAMA VEDA.

1st. WHO is he [*asks a pupil of his spiritual father,*] under whose sole will the intellectual power makes its approach to *different objects!* Who is he under whose authority *breath*, the primitive *power in the body*, makes its operation? Who is he by whose direction language is *regularly* pronounced? And who is that immaterial being that applies vision and hearing *to their respective objects?*

2nd. He, [*answers the spiritual parent,*] who is the sense of the sense of hearing; the intellect of the intellect; the essential cause of language; the breath of breath; the sense of the sense of vision;—this is the Being *concerning whom you would* enquire. Learned men, having relinquished *the notion of self-independence and self-consideration from knowing the Supreme Understanding to be the sole source of sense,* enjoy everlasting beatitude after their departure from this world.

3rd. Hence no vision can approach him, no language can describe him, no intellectual power can compass or determine him. We know nothing of how the Supreme Being should be explained: he is beyond all that is within the reach of comprehension, and also beyond nature, which is above conception. Our ancient *spiritual parents* have thus explained him to us.

4th. He alone, who has never been described by language, and who directs language *to its meaning*, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship; know THOU this.

5th. He alone, whom understanding cannot comprehend, and who, as said *by learned men*, knows the real nature of understanding, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship; know THOU this.

6th. He alone, whom no one can conceive by vision, and by whose superintendence every one perceives the objects of vision, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship: KNOW THOU this.

7th. He alone, whom no one can hear through the sense of hearing, and who knows the real nature of the sense of hearing, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship: know THOU this.

8th. He alone, whom no one can perceive through the sense of smelling, and who applies the sense of smelling *to its objects*, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship: know THOU this.

9th. If you [*continues the spiritual parent*], *from what I have stated*, suppose *and say* that "I know the Supreme Being thoroughly," you in truth know very little of the Omnipresent Being; and any conception of that Being which you limit to your powers of sense, is not only deficient, but also his description which you extend to the bodies of the celestial gods, is also imperfect;* you consequently should enquire into the true knowledge of the Supreme Being. *To this the pupil replies*: "I perceive that *at this moment* I begin to know God."

10th. "Not that I suppose," *continues* he, "that I know God thoroughly, nor do I suppose that I do not know him at all: as, among us, he who knows the meaning of the above-stated assertion, is possessed of the knowledge respecting God, *viz.*, 'that I neither know 'him thoroughly, nor am entirely ignorant of him.'"

11th. [*The spiritual father again resumes*:] He who believes that he cannot comprehend God, *does* know him; and he who believes that he can comprehend God, *does not* know him: as men of perfect understanding acknowledge him to be beyond comprehension; and men of imperfect understanding suppose him to be within the reach of their simplest perception.

12th. The notion of the sensibility of bodily organs, *which are composed of insensible particles*, leads to the notion of God; which notion alone is accurate, and tends to everlasting happiness. Man gains, by self-exertion, the power of acquiring knowledge respecting God, and through the same acquisition he acquires eternal beatitude.

13th. Whatever person has, *according to the above stated doctrine*, known God, is really happy, and whoever has not known him is subjected to great misery. Learned men, having reflected on the Spirit of God extending over all moveable as well as immoveable creatures, after their departure from this world are absorbed into the Supreme Being.

* The sum of the notion concerning the Supreme Being given in the Vedanta, is, that he is "the Soul of the universe, and bears the same relation to all material extensions "that a human soul does to the individual body with which it is connected".

In a battle between the celestial gods and the demons,* God obtained victory over the latter, in favour of the former *(or properly speaking, God enabled the former to defeat the latter)*; but, upon this victory being gained, the celestial gods acquired their respective dignities, and supposed that this victory and glory were entirely owing to themselves. The Omnipresent Being, having known their boast, appeared to them *with an appearance beyond description.*

They could not know what adorable appearance it was: they, *consequently,* said to fire, *or properly speaking the* god of fire: "Discover thou, O god of fire, what adorable appearance this is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which asked him, "who art thou?" He then answered, "I am fire, and "I am the origin of the Veda," *that is, I am a well-known personage.* The Supreme Omnipotence, upon being thus replied to, asked him *again,* "What power is in so celebrated a person as thou art?" He replied, "I can burn to ashes all that exists in the world." The Supreme Being then having laid a straw before him, said to him, "Canst thou burn this straw?" The god of fire approached the straw, but could not burn it, though he exerted all his power. He then *unsuccessfully* retired and *told the others,* "I have been unable "to discover what adorable appearance this is." Now they all said to wind *(or properly to the god of wind),* "Discover thou, O god of wind, "what adorable appearance this is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which asked him, "Who art thou?" He then answered, "I am wind, and I pervade unlimited space;" *that is, I am a well-known personage.* The Supreme Being, *upon being* thus replied to, asked him *again,* "What power is "in so celebrated a person as thou art?" He replied, "I can uphold "all that exists in the world." The Supreme Being then, having laid a straw before him, said to him, "Canst thou uphold this straw?" The god of wind approached the straw, but could not hold it up, though he exerted all his power. He then *unsuccessfully* retired *and told the others,* "I have been unable to discover what adorable appearance this is." Now they all said to the god of atmosphere, "Discover "thou, O revered god of atmosphere, what adorable appearance this "is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable

* In the Akhyayika it is said that those powers of the Divinity which produce agreeable effects and conduce to moral order and happiness, are represented under the figure of celestial gods, and those attributes from which pain and misery flow, are called demons and step-brothers of the former, with whom they are in a state of perpetual hostility.

appearance, which vanished from his view. He met at the same spot a woman, *the goddess of instruction*, arrayed in golden robes in the shape of the most beautiful Uma.* He asked, "What was that "adorable appearance?" She replied, "It was the Supreme Being "owing to whose victory you are all advanced to exaltation." The god of atmosphere, from her instruction, knew that it was the Supreme Being *that had appeared to them. He at first communicated that information to the gods of fire and of wind.* As the gods of fire, wind, and atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance, and had perceived it, as also they had known, prior *to the others*, that it was indeed God *that appeared to them*, they seemed to be superior to the other gods. As the god of atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance, and perceived it, and also as he knew, prior to *every one of them*, that it was God *that appeared to them*, he seemed not only superior to every other god, but also, *for that reason*, exalted above the gods of fire and wind.

The foregoing is a divine figurative representation of the Supreme Being; meaning that in one instant he shines at once *over all the universe* like the illumination of lightning; and in another, that he disappears as quick as the twinkling of an eye. Again, it is represented *of the Supreme Being*, that *pure* mind conceives that it approaches to him as nearly as possible: Through the same pure mind the pious man thinks of him, and consequently application of the mind to him is repeatedly used. That God, *who alone in reality has no resemblance, and to whom the mind* cannot approach, is adorable by all living creatures; he is therefore called "*adorable*;" he should, *according to the prescribed manner*, be worshipped. All creatures revere the person who knows God in the manner thus described. The pupil *now says*, "Tell me, O spiritual father, the Upanishad or the principal part "of the Veda." The *spiritual father makes this answer*, "I have told "you the principal part of the Veda which relates to God alone, and, "indeed, told you the Upanishad, of which, austere devotion, control "over the senses, performance of religious rites, and the remaining "parts of the Veda, as well as those sciences that are derived from the "Vedas, are *only* the feet; and whose altar and support is truth," He who understands it as thus described, having relieved himself from sin, acquires eternal and unchangeable beatitude.

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* The wife of Siva.

TRANSLATION

OF THE

UTH-OPUNISHUD

OF THE

UJOOR-VED.

ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED

SUNKURACHARYU.

CALCUTTA,

1819.

PREFACE.

In pursuance of my attempt to render a translation of the complete Vedanta, or the principal parts of the Vedas into the current languages of this country, I had some time ago the satisfaction of publishing a translation of the Katha-Upanishad of the Yajur-veda into Bengalee; and of distributing copies of it as widely as my circumstances would allow, for the purpose of diffusing Hindoo scriptural knowledge among the adherents of that religion. The present publication is intended to assist the European community in forming their opinion respecting Hindoo Theology, rather from the matter found in their doctrinal scriptures, than from the Puranas, moral tales, or any other modern works, or from the superstitious rites and habits daily encouraged and fostered by their self-interested leaders.

This work not only treats polytheism with contempt and disdain, but inculcates invariably the unity of God as the intellectual Principle, the sole Origin of individual intellect, entirely distinct from matter and its affections; and teaches also the mode of directing the mind to him.

A great body of my countrymen, possessed of good understandings, and not much fettered with prejudices, being perfectly satisfied with the truth of the doctrines contained in this and in other works, already laid by me before them, and of the gross errors of the puerile system of idol-worship which they were led to follow, have altered their religious conduct in a manner becoming the dignity of human beings; while the advocates of idolatry and their misguided followers, over whose opinions prejudice and obstinacy prevail more than good sense and judgment, prefer custom and fashion to the authorities of their scriptures, and therefore continue, under the form of religious devotion, to practise a system which destroys, to the utmost degree, the natural texture of society, and prescribes crimes of the most heinous nature, which even the most savage nations would blush to commit, unless compelled by the most urgent necessity.* I am, however, not without a sanguine hope that, through Divine

* [illegible] d of the Introduction to the Mundaka Upanishad

Providence and human exertions, they will sooner or later avail themselves of that true system of religion which leads its observers to a knowledge and love of God, and to a friendly inclination towards their fellow-creatures, impressing their hearts at the same time with humility and charity, accompanied by independence of mind and pure sincerity. Contrary to the code of idolatry, this system defines sins as evil thoughts proceeding from the heart, quite unconnected with observances as to diet and other matters of form. At any rate, it seems to me that I cannot better employ my time than in an endeavour to illustrate and maintain truth, and to render service to my fellow-labourers, confiding in the mercy of that Being to whom the motives of our actions and secrets of our hearts are well-known.

KATHA UPANISHAD.

DESIROUS *of future fruition*, Bajasravasa *performed the sacrifice Viswajit, at which* he distributed all his property. He had a son named Nachiketa. *Old and infirm cows* being brought by the father as fees to be given to attending priests, the youth was seized with compassion, reflecting within himself, "He who gives *to attending priests* such "cows as are no longer able to drink water or to eat grass, and are "incapable of giving further milk or of producing young, is carried "to that mansion where there is no felicity whatever."

He then said to his father, "To whom, O father, wilt thou consign "me over *in lieu of these cows?*" and repeated the same question a second and a third time.

Enraged with his presumption, the father replied to him, "I shall "give thee to Yama" (*the god of death*). *The youth then said to himself*, "*In the discharge of my duties as a son*, I hold a foremost "place among many sons or pupils of the first class, and I am not "inferior to any of the sons or pupils of the second class: whether "my father had a previous engagement with Yama, which he will "now perform by surrendering me *to him, or made use of such an* "*expression through anger, I know not.*" *The youth finding his father afflicted with sorrow, said*, "Remember the meritorious conduct of our "ancient *forefathers*, and observe the virtuous acts of contemporary "good men. *Life is too short to gain advantages by means of falsehood* "*or breach of promise*; as man like a plant is easily destroyed, and "again like it puts forth its form. *Do you therefore surrender me to* "*Yama according to your promise.*" *The youth Nachiketa, by permission of his father, went to the habitation of Yama. After he had remained there for three days without food or refreshment, Yama returned to his dwelling, and was thus addressed by his family:* "A "Brahman entering a house as a guest is like fire; *good householders*, "*therefore*, extinguish his anger *by offering him water, a seat, and* "*food*. Do thou, O Yama, present him with water. A man deficient "in wisdom suffers his hopes, his sanguine expectation of success, "his improvement from associating with good men, the benefit

"which he might derive from his affable conversation, and the fruits "produced by performance of prescribed sacrifices, and also by digging "of wells and other pious liberal actions, as well as all his sons and "cattle, to be destroyed, should a Brahman happen to remain in his "house without food."

Yama being thus admonished by his family, approached Nachiketa and said to him; "As thou, O Brahman, hast lived in my house, a "revered guest, for the space of three *days and* nights without food, "I offer thee reverence in atonement, so that bliss may attend me; "and do thou ask three favours *of me* as a recompense for what thou "hast suffered while dwelling in my house during these days past." *Nachiketa then made this as his first request, saying*, "Let, O Yama! "my father Gotama's apprehension *of my death* be removed, his "tranquillity of mind be restored, his anger against me extinguished, "and let him recognise me *on my return*, after having been set free "by thee. This is the first of three favours which I ask of thee."

Yama then replied:

"*Thy father*, styled Auddalaki and Aruni, shall have the same "regard for you as before; so that, being assured of thy existence, "he shall, through my power, repose the remaining nights *of his life* "free from sorrow, after having seen thee released from the grasp of "death." Nachiketa then made his second request. "In heaven, "where there is no fear whatsoever, and where even thou, O Yama! "canst not *always exercise thy authority*, and where, therefore, none "dread *thy power so much*, as weak mortals of the earth, the soul, "unafflicted either by thirst or hunger, and unmolested by sorrow, "enjoys gratification. As thou, O Yama! dost possess knowledge "respecting fire which is the means of attaining heaven, do thou "instruct me, who am full of faith, in that knowledge; for, those who "enjoy heaven, owing to their observance of sacred fire, are endowed "with the nature of celestial deities. This I ask of thee, as the "second favour which thou hast offered." *Yama replied*: "Being "possessed of a knowledge of fire, the means that lead to the "enjoyment of heavenly gratifications, I impart it to thee; which "do thou attentively observe. Know thou fire, as means to obtain "various mansions in heaven, as the support *of the world*, and as "residing in the body."

Yama explained to Nachiketa the nature of fire, as being prior to all creatures, and also the particulars of the bricks and their number,

which are requisite in forming the sacred fire, as well as the mode of preserving it. The youth repeated to Yama these instructions exactly as imparted to him; at which Yama being pleased, again spoke.

The liberal-minded Yama, satisfied with Nachiketa, thus says; "I shall bestow on thee another favour, *which is*, that this sacred fire "shall be styled after thy name; and accept thou this valuable and "various-coloured necklace. Receiving instructions from parents and "spiritual fathers, a person who has thrice collected fire, *as prescribed* "*in the Veda*, and also has been in habits of performing sacrifices. "studying the Vedas, and giving alms, is not liable to repeated birth "and death: he, having known and contemplated fire as originating "from Brahma, possessing superior understanding, full of splendour, "and worthy of praise, enjoys the highest fruition. A wise worshipper "of sacred fire, who, understanding the three things prescribed, has "offered oblation to fire, surmounting all afflictions during life, and "extricated from sorrow, will enjoy gratifications in heaven.

"This, O Nachiketa! is that knowledge of sacred fire, the means "of obtaining heaven, which thou didst require of me as the second "favour; men shall call it after thy name. Make, O Nachiketa! thy "third request."

Nachiketa then said: "Some are of opinion that after man's "demise existence continues, and others say it ceases. Hence a doubt "has arisen *respecting the nature of the soul*; I therefore wish to be "instructed by thee in this matter. This is the last of the favours thou "hast offered." *Yama replied*: "Even gods have doubted and disputed "on this subject; which being obscure, never can be thoroughly "comprehended: Ask, O Nachiketa! another favour *instead of this*. "Do not thou take advantage of my promise, but give up this "request." *Nachiketa replied*: "*I am* positively informed that gods "entertained doubts on this subject; and even thou, O Yama! callest "it difficult of comprehension. But no instructor on this point equal "to thee can be found, and no other object is so desirable as this" Yama said: "Do thou rather request of me to give thee sons and "grandsons, each to attain the age of an hundred years; numbers of "cattle, elephants, goats, and horses; also extensive empire on earth, "where thou shalt live as many years as thou wishest.

"If thou knowest another object equally desirable with these, ask "it; together with wealth and long life. Thou mayest reign, O

"Nachiketa! over a great kingdom: I will enable thee to enjoy all "wished-for objects.

"Ask according to thy desire all objects that are difficult of "acquisition in the mortal world. Ask these beautiful women, with "elegant equipages and musical instruments; as no man can acquire "any thing like them *without our gift.* Enjoy thou the attendance "of these women, whom I may bestow on thee; but do not put to me, "O Nachiketa! the question respecting existence after death."

Nachiketa then replied. "The acquisition of the enjoyments thou "hast offered, O Yama! is *in the first place* doubtful; and should "they be obtained, they destroy the strength of all the senses; and "even the life of Brahma is, indeed, comparatively short. Therefore "let thy equipages, and thy dancing and music, remain with thee.

"No man can be satisfied with riches; and as we have *fortunately* "beheld thee, we may acquire wealth, should we feel desirous of it, "and we also may live as long as thou exercisest the authority of the "god of death; but the only object I desire is what I have already "begged *of thee.*

"A mortal being, whose habitation is the low mansion of earth, "and who is liable to sudden reduction, approaching the gods ex-"empted from death and debility, and understanding from them *that* "*there is a knowledge of futurity, should not ask of them any inferior* "*favour*—and knowing the fleeting nature of music, sexual gratifica-"tion, and sensual pleasures, who can take delight in a long life on "earth? Do you instruct us in that knowledge which removes "doubts respecting existence after death, and is of great importance "with a view to futurity, and which is obscure and acquirable with "difficulty. I, Nachiketa, cannot ask any other favour but this."

End of the first Section of the first Chapter (1st Valli).

Yama now, after a sufficient trial of Nachiketa's resolution, answers the third question, saying, "Knowledge of God which leads to "absorption, is one thing; and rites, which have fruition for their "object, another: each of these producing different consequences, "holds out to man inducements to follow it. The man, who of these "two chooses knowledge, is blessed; and he who, *for the sake of* "*reward,* practises rites, is excluded from the enjoyment of eternal 'beatitude. Knowledge and rites both offer themselves to man; but

"he who is possessed of wisdom, taking their respective natures into "serious consideration, distinguishes one from the other, and chooses "faith, despising fruition; and a fool, for the sake of advantage and "enjoyment, accepts the offer of rites.

"Thou, O Nachiketa! knowing the perishable nature of the "desirable and gratifying objects offered by me, hast rejected them, "and refused the adoption of that contemptible practice, which leads "to fruition and to riches, and to which men in general are attached. "Wise men *are sensible* that a knowledge of God *which procures* "*absorption*, and the performance of rites *that produces fruition*, are "entirely opposite to each other, and yield different consequences. I "conceive thee, Nachiketa, to be desirous of a knowledge of God, for "the numerous estimable objects offered by me cannot tempt thee. "Surrounded by the darkness of ignorance, fools consider themselves "wise and learned, and wander about in various directions, like "blind men when guided by a blind man.

"To an indiscreet man who lives carelessly, and is immersed in "the desire of wealth, the means of gaining heavenly beatitude are "not manifest. He thinks that this visible world alone exists, and "that there is nothing hereafter; consequently he is repeatedly sub-"jected to my control. The soul is that of whose real nature many "persons have never heard; and several though they have heard, "have not comprehended. A man who is capable of giving instruc-"tion on this subject is rare: one who listens to it attentively, must "be intelligent: and that one who, being taught by a wise teacher, "understands it, is uncommon.

"If a man of inferior abilities describe the nature of the soul, no "one will thoroughly understand it; for various opinions are held *by* "*contending parties.* When the subject is explained by a person "who believes the soul to emanate from God, doubt, in regard to its "eternity, ceases; but otherwise it is inexplicable and not capable of "demonstration.

"The knowledge respecting the soul which thou wilt gain by me, "cannot be acquired by means of reason alone; but it should be "obtained from him who is versed in the sacred authorities. Oh, "beloved pupil, Nachiketa! may we have enquirers like thee, who "art full of resolution. I know that fruition, acquirable by means "of rites, is perishable; for nothing eternal can be obtained through "perishable means. *Notwithstanding my conviction of the destruc-*

"*tible nature of fruition,* I performed the worship of the sacred fire, "whereby I became possessed of this sovereignty of long duration.

"Thou, Oh wise Nachiketa! hast through firmness refused, though "offered to thee, the state of Brahma, which satisfies every desire, "and which is the support of the world—the best consequence of the "performance of rites without limit or fear—praiseworthy—full of "superhuman power—extensive and stable.

"The soul is that which is difficult to be comprehended—most "obscure—veiled by the ideas acquired through the senses, and which "resides in faculties—does not depart even in great danger and exists "unchangeable. A wise man knowing the resplendent soul, through a "mind abstracted from worldly objects, and constantly applied to it, "neither rejoices nor does he grieve.

"A mortal who, having heard the pure doctrines relative to the "soul and retained them in his memory, knowing the invisible soul "to be distinct from *the body,* feels rejoiced at his acquisition. I think "the abode of the knowledge of God is open to thee."

Nachiketa then asked. "If thou knowest any Being who *exists* "distinctly from rites, their consequences and their observers, and "also from evil, and who is different from effects and their respec- "tive causes, and is above past, future, and present time, do thou "inform me."

Yama replies: "I will explain to thee briefly that Being whom all "the Vedas treat of, *either directly or indirectly,* to whom all austeri- "ties are directed, and who is the main object of those who perform "the duties of an ascetic, He to wit, whom the word Om implies, is "the Supreme Being.

"That Om is the title of Brahma and also of the Supreme Being, "through means of which man may gain what he wishes; (*that is, if he worship Brahma by means of Om, he shall be received into his mansion; or if through it he elevate his mind to God, he shall obtain absorption.*)

"Om is the best of all means *calculated* to direct the mind towards "God; and it is instrumental either in the acquisition of the knowledge "of God *or of the dignity of Brahma*: man therefore having recourse "to this word, shall either be absorbed in God, or revered like Brahma

"The soul is not liable to birth nor to death: it is mere understand- "ing: neither does it take its origin from any other or from itself "hence it is unborn, eternal without reduction and unchangeable

"therefore the soul is not injured by the hurt which the body may "receive. If any one ready to kill another imagine that he can destroy "his soul, and the other think that his soul shall suffer destruction, "they both know nothing; for neither does it kill nor is it killed by "another.

"The soul is the smallest of the small, and greatest of the great. "It resides in the hearts of all living creatures. A man who knows "it and its pure state, through the steadiness of the external and "internal senses, acquired from the abandoning of worldly desires, "overcomes sorrow and perplexity.

"The soul, although without motion, seems to go to furthest space; "and though it resides in the body at rest, yet seems to move every-"where. Who can perceive besides myself, that splendid soul, the "support of the sensation of happiness and pain?

"The soul, although it is immaterial, yet resides closely attached "to perishable material objects: knowing it as great and extensive, "a wise man never grieves for it. A knowledge of the soul is not "acquirable from the study of the Vedas, nor through rententive "memory, nor yet by constant hearing of spiritual instruction: but "he who seeks to obtain a knowledge of it, is gifted with it, the soul "rendering itself conspicuous to him.

"No man can acquire a knowledge of the soul without abstaining "from evil acts; without having control over the senses and the "mind; nor can he gain it with a mind, though firm, yet filled with "the desire of fruition; but man may obtain a knowledge of the soul "through his knowledge of God.

"No *ignorant* man can, in a perfect manner, know the state of "the existence of that God whose food is *all things* even the Brahma "and the Kshatra; (*that is, who destroys every object bearing figure "and appellation*); and who consumes death itself even as butter."

The end of the second Section of the first Chapter (2nd Valli).

"God and the soul* entering into the heart, the excellent divine "abode, consume, while residing in the body, the necessary consequen-"ces of its actions; *that is, the latter is rewarded or punished according "to its good or evil actions, and the former witnesses all those events*

* The word soul here means the human soul, *Jivatma*; but generally in these translations it is used for *Paramatma*, the "Oversoul"—ED.

"Those who have a knowledge of God, consider the former as light and "the latter as shade: observers of external rites also, as well as those "who have collected fire three times for worship, believe the same.

"We can *know and collect fire*, which is a bridge to the observers "of rites; and can know the eternal and fearless God, who is the con- "veyer of those who wish to cross the ocean of ignorance. Consider "the soul as a rider, the body as a car, the intellect its driver, the mind "as its rein, the external senses are called the horses restrained by "the mind, external objects are the roads: so wise men believe the "soul united with the body, the senses and the mind, to be the partaker "*of the consequences of good or evil acts.*

"If that intellect, *which is represented as the driver*, be indiscreet, "and the rein of the mind loose, all the senses *under the authority of* "*the intellectual power* become unmanageable; like wicked horses under "the control of an *unfit* driver.

"If the intellect be discreet and the rein of the mind firm, all the "senses prove steady and manageable; like good horses under an "excellent driver.

"He, who has not a prudent intellect and steady mind and who "consequently lives always impure, cannot arrive at the divine glory, "but descends to the world.

"He who has a prudent intellect and steady mind, and consequently "lives always pure, attains that glory from whence he never will descend.

"Man who has intellect as his prudent driver, and a steady mind "as his rein, passing over the paths of mortality, arrives at the high "glory of the omnipresent God.

"The origin of the senses is more refined than the senses; the "essence of the mind is yet more refined than that origin: the source "of intellect is again more exalted than that of the mind; the prime "sensitive particle is superior to the source of intellect; nature, the ap- "parent cause of the universe, is again superior to that particle, to "which the omnipresent God is still superior: nothing is more exalted "than God: he is therefore superior to all existences, and is the Supreme "object of all. God exists obscurely throughout the universe, *con-* "*sequently* is not perceived; but he is known through the acute intellect "constantly directed towards him by wise men of penetrating under- "standings. A wise man shall transfer the power of speech and that of "the senses to the mind, and the mind to the intellect, and the intellect "to the *purified* soul, and the soul to the unchangeable Supreme Being.

"Rise up and awake *from the sleep of ignorance*; and having "approached able teachers, acquire knowledge *of God, the origin of the* "*soul*: for the way to the knowledge of God is considered by wise men "difficult as the passage over the sharp edge of a razor. The Supreme "Being is not organised with the faculties of hearing, feeling, vision, "taste or smell. He is unchangeable and eternal; without beginning "or end; and is beyond that particle which is the origin of the intellect: "*man* knowing him thus, is relieved from the grasp of death."

A wise man reading to *Brahmans*, or hearing *from a teacher*, this ancient doctrine imparted to Nachiketa by Yama, is absorbed into God.

He who reads this most secret doctrine before an assemblage of Brahmans, or at the time of offering oblations to his forefathers, enjoys innumerable good consequences.

The end of the third Section of the first Chapter (3rd Valli).

"God has created the senses to be directed towards external objects; "they consequently are apt to perceive outward things only, and not the "eternal spirit. But a wise man being desirous of eternal life, with- "drawing his senses from their natural course, apprehends the omni- "present Supreme Being.

"The ignorant seek external and desireable objects only; "*consequently* they are subjected to the chain of all-seizing death. "Hence the wise, knowing that God alone is immortal and eternal in "this perishable world, do not cherish a wish *for those objects*.

"To Him, owing to whose presence alone the animate being, "*composed of insensible particles*, perceive objects through vision, the "power of taste, of feeling, and of hearing, and also the pleasure "derivable from sexual intercourse, nothing can be unknown: he is "that existence which *thou desiredst to know*.

"A wise man after having known that the soul, owing to whose "presence living creatures perceive objects whether they dream or "wake, is great and extensive, never grieves.

"He who believes that the soul, which enjoys the fruits of good "or evil actions, intimately connected with the body, originates from "and is united with God, the Lord of past and future events, will not "conceal its nature: he is that existence which thou desiredst to know. "He who knows that the prime sensitive particle, which proceeded from "God prior to the creation of water and the other elements, having

"entered into the heart, exists united with material objects, knows the "Supreme Being. He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"That sensitive particle which perceives objects, and includes all "the celestial deities, and which was created with all the elements, "exists, entering into the space of the heart, and there resides. It "is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"The sacred fire, the receiver of oblations after the wood has been "kindled below and above, is preserved by its observers with the same "care as pregnant women take of their fœtus: it is praised daily by "prudent observers, and men habituated to constant devotion. That "atmosphère from whence the sun ascends, and in which he goes "down, on which all the world, *including fire, speech, and other* things "rest, and independently of which nothing exists, is that existence "which thou desiredst to know. Whatever individual intellect there "is connected with the body, is that intellectual principle, which is "pure and immaterial existence, and the intellectual overspreading "principle is the individual intellect; but he who thinks here that they "are different in nature, is subject to repeated transmigrations.

"Through the mind, *purified by spiritual instructions*, the know-"ledge that the soul is of divine origin, and by no means is different "*from its source*, shall be acquired, whereby the idea of duality "entirely ceases. He who thinks there is variety of intellectual "principle, undergoes transmigration.

"The omnipresent spirit, extending over the space of the heart, which "is the size of a finger, resides within the body; and persons knowing "him the Lord of past and future events, will not again attempt to "conceal his nature: He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"The omnipresent spirit which extends over the space of the "heart, the size of a finger, is the most pure light. He is the Lord "of past and future events; He alone pervades *the universe* now and "ever; He is that existence which thou desiredst to know. In the "same way as water falling on uneven ground disperses throughout "the narrow places, and is lost, so a man who thinks that the souls "of different bodies are distinct in nature from each other, shall be "placed in various forms by transmigration.

"As water falling on even grounds remains unchanged, so the soul "of a wise man of steady mind is *always* pure, freed from the idea of "duality."

End of the first Section of the second Chapter (4th Valli).

"The body is a dwelling with eleven gates, belonging to the "unborn and unchangeable spirit, through whose constant contem- "plation man escapes grief, and acquiring absorption, is exempted from "transmigration. He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"That spiritual Being acts *always* and moves in heaven; preserves "all material existence as depending on him; moves in space; resides "in fire; walks on the earth; enters like a guest into sacrificial vessels; "dwells in man, in gods, in sacrifices; moves throughout the sky; "seems to be born in water, *as fishes, &c.*; produced on earth, *as vege- "tables*, on the tops of mountains, *as rivers*, and also as members of "sacrifices: yet is he truly pure and great. He who causes breath to 'ascend above the heart and peditum to descend, resides in the heart: "He is adorable; and to him all the senses offer oblation of the objects "which they preceive.

"When the soul, which is connected with the body, leaves it, no- "thing then remains in the body which may preserve the system: It "is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"Neither by the help of breath, nor from the presence of other "powers, can a mortal exist: but they all existlowing to that other "existence on which both breath and the senses rest.

"I will now disclose to you the secret doctrine of the eternal "God: and also how man, *void of that knowledge*, O Gautama! "transmigrates after death.

"Some of those *who are ignorant of this doctrine* enter after death "the womb of females to appear in the animal shape, while others "assume the form of trees, according to their conduct and knowledge "*during their lives*.

"The Being who continues to operate even at that time of sleep, "when all the senses cease to act, and then creates desirable objects "of various descriptions, is pure and the greatest of all; and he alone is "called eternal, on whom all the world rests, and independently of "whom nothing can exist: He is that existence which thou desiredst "to know. As fire, although one in essence, on becoming visible in the "world, appears in various forms and shapes, according to its different "locations, so God, the soul of the universe, though one, appears in "various modes, according as he connects himself with different "material objects, and, *like space*, extends over all.

"As air, although one in essence, in becoming operative in the "body appears in various natures, as breath and other vital airs, so

"God, the soul of the universe, though one, appears in different "modes, according as he connects himself with various material "objects, and, *like space*, extends over all.

"As the sun, though he serves as the eye of all living creatures, "yet is not polluted externally *or internally* by being connected with "visible vile objects, so God, the soul of the universe, although one "and omnipresent, is not affected by the sensations of individual "pain, for he is beyond its action.

"God is but one; and he has the whole world under his control, "for he is the operating soul in all objects; He, *through his omni-"science*, makes his sole existence appear in the form of the universe. "To those wise men who acquire a knowledge of him who is operative "on the human faculties, is eternal beatitude allotted, and not to "those who are void of that knowledge.

"God is eternal amidst the perishable universe; and is the source "of sensation among all animate existences: and he alone assigns to "so many objects their respective purposes: To those wise men who "know him the ruler of the intellectual power, everlasting beatitude "is allotted; but not to those who are void of that knowledge.

"How can I acquire that most gratifying divine knowledge, which, "though beyond comprehension, *wise men, by constant application of "mind, alone obtain*, as if it were present? Does it shine conspi-"cuously?—and does it appear to the human faculties?

"Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor yet the stars can throw light "on God: Even the illuminating lightning cannot throw light upon "him; much less can limited fire give him light: But they all imitate "him, and all borrow their light from him—*that is, nothing can "influence God and render him perspicuous: But God himself imparts "his knowledge to the heart freed from passion and desire.*"

End of the second Section of the second Chapter (*5th Valli*).

"The world is a fig-tree of long duration, whose origin is above, "and the branches of which, *as different species*, are below. The "origin alone is pure and supreme; and he alone is eternal on whom "all the world rests, and independently of whom nothing can exist. "He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

"God being eternal existence,t he universe, whatsoever it is, exists "and proceeds from him. He is the great dread of all *heavenly "bodies*, as if he were prepared to strike them with thunderbolts;

"*so that none of them can deviate from their respective courses* "*established by him.* Those who know him as the eternal power "acquire absorption.

"Through his fear fire supplies *us* with heat; and the sun, "through his fear, shines *regularly*; and also Indra, and air, and "fifthly, death, are through his fear constantly in motion.

"If *man* can acquire a knowledge of God in this world, before the "fall of his body, *he becomes happy for ever*: Otherwise he assumes "new forms in different mansions. *A knowledge of God shines* on the "purified intellect in this world, as clearly as an object is seen by "reflection in a polished mirror: In the region of the deified Progeni-"tors of mankind *it is viewed* as obscurely as objects perceived in the "state of dreaming; and in the mansion of Gandharvas, in the same "degree as the reflection of an object on water; but in the mansion "of Brahma it appears as distinctly as the difference between light "and darkness.

"A wise man, knowing the soul to be distinct from the senses, "which proceed from different origins, and also from the state of "waking and of sleep, never again grieves.

"The mind is more refined than the external senses; and the "intellect is again more exalted than the mind. The prime sensitive "particle is superior to the intellect;—nature, the apparent cause "of the universe, is again superior to that particle unaffected by "matter: *Superior to nature is God*, who is omnipresent and without "material effects; by acquisition of whose knowledge man becomes "extricated from ignorance and distress, and is absorbed into Him "*after death.* His substance does not come with in the reach of vision; "no one can apprehend him through the senses: By constant direction "of the intellect, free from doubts, he perspicuously appears; and "those who know him in the prescribed manner, enjoy eternal life.

"The part of life wherein the power of the five external senses and "the mind are directed towards the Supreme Spirit, and the intellec-"tual power ceases its action, is said to be most sacred; and this 'steady control of the senses and mind is considered to be *Yoga* (*or* '*withdrawing the senses and the mind from worldly objects*): Man 'should be vigilant in the acquisition of that state; for such control proceeds from constant exercise, and ceases by neglect.

"Neither through speech, nor through intellectual power, nor yet 'through vision, can man acquire a knowledge of God; but, save him

who believes in the existence of God *as the cause of the universe*, no "one can have a notion of that Being. A man should acquire, first, "a belief in the existence of God, the origin of the universe; and "next, a real knowledge of him; to wit, that he is incomprehensible; "for the means which lead men to acquire a knowledge of his existence, "graciously conduct them to the belief of his incomprehensibility. "When all the desires settled in the heart leave man, the mortal then "become immortal, and acquire absorption even in this life. When "the deep ignorance *which occasions duality* is entirely destroyed, "the mortal become immortal: This is the only doctrine which *the* "*Vedanta* inculcates.

"There are one hundred and one tubes connected with the heart, "one of *which, called Sushumna*, proceeds to the head: The soul of a "devotee proceeding through the hundred and first, is carried to the "mansion of the immortal Brahma; and those of others, which ascend "by other tubes, assume different bodies, *according to the evil or good* "*acts which they perform*.

"The omnipresent eternal spirit resides always within that space of "the human heart which is as large as a finger: Man should, by firmness "of mind, separate that spirit from the body, in the same manner as "the pith is removed from the plant Munja: *that is, the spirit should* "*be considered totally distinct from matter and the effects of matter*— "and man should know that separated spirit to be pure and eternal."

Having thus acquired this divine doctrine, imparted to the God of death, with every thing belonging to it, Nachiketa, freed from the consequences of good or evil acts, and from mortality, was absorbed into God; and whatever person also can acquire that knowledge, shall obtain absorption.

End of the third Section of the second Chapter (6th Valli).

End of the Katha Upanishad.

TRANSLATION

OF THE

ISHOPANISHAD,

ONE OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE

YAJUR VED:

ACCORDING TO THE COMMENTARY OF THE CELEBRATED

SHANKAR-ACHARYA:

ESTABLISHING THE UNITY AND

INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF

THE SUPREME BEING;

AND THAT

HIS WORSHIP ALONE

CAN LEAD TO ETERNAL BEATITUDE.

CALCUTTA:

1816.

PREFACE.

THE most learned Vyasa shows, in his work of the Vedanta, that all the texts of the Veda, with one consent, prove but the Divinity of that Being, who is out of the reach of comprehension and beyond all description. For the use of the public, I have made a concise translation of that celebrated work into Bengalee, and the present is an endeavour to translate* the principal Chapters of the Veda, in conformity to the Comments of the great Sankar-Acharya. The translation of the Isopanishad belonging to the Yajur, the second division of the Vedas, being already completed, I have put it into the press; † and the others will successively be printed, as soon as their translation is completed. It is evident, from those authorities, that the sole regulator of the Universe is but one, who is omnipresent, far surpassing our powers of comprehension; above external sense; and whose worship is the chief duty of mankind and the sole cause of eternal beatitude; and that all that bear figure and appellation are inventions. Should it be asked, whether the assertions found in the Puranas‡ and Tantras, &c., respecting the worship of the several gods and goddesses, are false, or whether Puranas and Tantras are not included in the Sastra, the answer is this:—The Purana and Tantra,§ &c., are of course to be considered as Sastra, for they repeatedly declare God to be one and above the apprehension of external and internal senses; they indeed expressly declare the divinity of many gods and goddesses, and the modes of their worship; but they reconcile those contradictory assertions by affirming frequently, that the directions to worship any figured beings are only applicable to those who are incapable of elevating their minds to the idea of an invisible Supreme Being, in order that such persons, by fixing their

* I must confess how much I feel indebted to Doctor H. H. Wilson, in my translations from Sanskrit into English, for the use of his Sanskrit and English Dictionary.

† Wherever any comment, upon which the sense of the original depends, is added to the original, it will be found written in Italics.

‡ Said to have been written by Vyasa.

§ Supposed to have been composed by Siva.

attention on those invented figures, may be able to restrain themselves from vicious temptations, and that those that are competent for the worship of the invisible God, should disregard the worship of Idols. I repeat a few of these declarations as follows. The authority of Jamadagni is thus quoted by the great Raghunandana: "For the "benefit of those who are inclined to worship, figures are invented to "serve as representations of God, who is merely understanding, and "has no second, no parts, nor figure; consequently, to these represen- "tatives, either male or female forms and other circumstances are "fictitiously assigned." In the second Chapter of the first part of the Vishnu Purana it is said; "God is without figure, epithet, definition "or description. He is without defect, not liable to annihilation, "change, pain or birth; we can only say, That he, who is the "eternal being is God." "The vulgar look for their gods in "water; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies; "the ignorant in wood, bricks, and stones; but learned men in "the universal soul." In the 84th Chapter of the tenth division of the Sri Bhagavata, Krishna says to Vyasa and others: It "is impossible for those who consider pilgrimage as devotion, and "believe that the divine nature exists in the image, to look up "to, communicate with, to petition and to revere true believers "in God. He who views as the soul this body formed of phlegm, "wind and bile, or regards only wife, children, and relations as him- "self (that is, he who neglects to contemplate the nature of the soul), "he who attributes a divine nature to earthen images, and believes in "the holiness of water, yet pays not such respect to those who are "endowed with a knowledge of God, is as an ass amongst cows." In the 9th Chapter of the Kularnava it is written: "A knowledge "of the Supreme Being, who is beyond the power of expression and "unchangeable, being acquired, all gods and goodesses, and their "texts which represent them, shall become slaves." "After a know- "ledge of the Supreme Being has been attained, there is no need to "attend to ceremonies prescribed by Sastras—no want of a fan should "be felt, when a soft southern wind is found to refresh." The Mahanirvana says, "Thus corresponding to the nature of different "powers or qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the "benefit of those who are not possessed of sufficient understanding." From the foregoing quotations it is evident, that though the Vedas, Puranas, and Tantras, frequently assert the existence of the plurality

of gods and goddesses, and prescribe the modes of their worship for men of insufficient understanding, yet they have also declared in a hundred others places, that these passages are to be taken merely in a figurative sense.

It cannot be alleged in support of Idolatry, that "although a know-"ledge of God is certainly above all things, still as it is impossible to "acquire that knowledge, men should of course worship figured gods;" for, had it been impossible to attain a knowledge of the Supreme Being, the Vedas and Puranas, as well as Tantras, would not have instructed mankind to aim at such attainment; as it is not to be supposed that direction to acquire what is obviously unattainable could be given by the Sastra, or even by a man of common sense. Should the Idolater say, "that the acquisition of a knowledge of God, "although it is not impossible, is most difficult of comprehension," I will agree with him in that point; but infer from it, that we ought, therefore, the more to exert ourselves, to acquire that knowledge; but I highly lament to observe, that so far from endeavouring to make such an acquisition, the very proposal frequently excites his anger and displeasure.

Neither can it be alleged that the Vedas, Puranas, &c., teach both the adoration of the Supreme Being and that of celestial gods and goddesses, but that the former is intended for Yatis or those that are bound by their profession to forsake all worldly considerations, and the latter for laymen; for, it is evident from the 48th Text of the 3rd Chapter of the Vedanta that a householder also is required to perform the worship of the Supreme Being.

Manu, also, the chief of Hindu lawgivers, after having prescribed all the varieties of rites and ceremonies, in Chapter 12th, Text 92, says, "Thus must the chief of the twice-born, though he neglect the "ceremonial rites mentioned in the Sastras, be diligent in attaining a "knowledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in repeat-"ing the Veda."

Again in the 4th Chapter, in describing the duties of laymen, the same author says, "Some, who well know the ordinances for the "oblations, do not perform externally the five great sacraments, but "continually make offerings in their own organs *of sensation and* "*intellect.*"

"Some constantly sacrifice their breath in their speech, *when they* "*instruct others of God aloud*, and their speech in their breath, *when*

'*they meditate in silence*, perceiving in their speech and breath thus "employed the imperishable fruit of a sacrificial offering."

"Other Brahmans incessantly perform those sacrifices only, seeing "with the eye of divine learning, that the scriptural knowledge is the "root of every ceremonial observance."

In the Yajnavalkya (Smriti) it is written :—"Even a householder, "who acquires a livelihood honestly, has faith in the Supreme Being, "shows hospitality to his guests, performs sacramental rites to his "forefathers, and is in the practice of telling truth, shall be absorbed "into the supreme essence." Should be it said, "It still remains "unaccountable, that notwithstanding the Vedas and Puranas re-"peatedly declare the unity of the Supreme Being, and direct "mankind to adore him alone, yet the generality of Hindus have "a contrary faith, and continue to practise idolatry," I would in answer request attention to the foundation on which the practical part of the Hindu religion is built. Many learned Brahmans are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the purer mode of divine worship. But as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry, they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they not only never fail to protect idol-worship from all attacks, but even advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest of the people. Their followers, too, confiding in these leaders, feel gratification in the idea of the Divine Nature residing in a being resembling themselves in birth, shape, and propensities; and are naturally delighted with a mode of worship agreeable to the senses, though destructive of moral principles, and the fruitful parent of prejudice and superstition.

Some Europeans, indued with high principles of liberality, but unacquainted with the ritual part of Hindu idolatry, are disposed to palliate it by an interpretation which, though plausible, is by no means well founded. They are willing to imagine, that the idols which the Hindus worship, are not viewed by them in the light of gods or as real personifications of the divine attributes, but merely as instruments for raising their minds to the contemplation of those attributes which are respectively represented by different figures. I have frequently had occasion to remark, that many Hindus also who are conversant with the English language, finding this interpretation a more plausible apology for idolatry than any with which they are

furnished by their own guides, do not fail to avail themselves of it, though in repugnance both to their faith and to their practice. The declarations of this description of Hindus naturally tend to confirm the original idea of such Europeans, who from the extreme absurdity of pure unqualified idolatry, deduce an argument against its existence. It appears to them impossible for men, even in the very last degree of intellectual darkness, to be so far misled as to consider a mere image of wood or of stone as a *human being*, much less as divine existence. With a view, therefore, to do away any misconception of this nature which may have prevailed, I beg leave to submit the following considerations.

Hindus of the present age, with a very few exceptions, have not the least idea that it is to the attributes of the Supreme Being, as figuratively represented by shapes corresponding to the nature of those attributes, they offer adoration and worship under the denomination of gods and goddesses. On the contrary, the slightest investigation will clearly satisfy every inquirer, that it makes a material part of their system to hold as articles of faith all those particular circumstances, which are essential to belief in the independent existence of the objects of their idolatry as deities clothed with divine power.

Locality of habitation and a mode of existence analogous to their own views of earthly things, are uniformly ascribed to each particular god. Thus the devotees of Siva, misconceiving the real spirit of the Scriptures, not only place an implicit credence in the separate existence of Siva, but even regard him as an omnipotent being, the greatest of all the divinities, who, as they say, inhabit the northern mountain of Kailasa; and that he is accompanied by two wives and several children, and surrounded with numerous attendants. In like manner the followers of Vishnu, mistaking the allegorical representations of the Sastras for relation of real facts, believe him to be chief over all other gods, and that he resides with his wife and attendants on the summit of heaven. Similar opinions are also held by the worshippers of Kali, in respect to that goddess. And in fact, the same observations are equally applicable to every class of Hindu devotees in regard to their respective gods and goddesses. And so tenacious are those devotees in respect to the honour due to their chosen divinities, that when they meet in such holy places as Haridwar, Prayag, Siva-Kanchi, or Vishnu-Kanchi in the Dekhin, the adjustment of the point of prece-

dence not only occasions the warmest verbal altercations, but sometimes even blows and violence. Neither do they regard the images of those gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind to the conception of those supposed beings; they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies called Prana-Pratishtha, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one, with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete, and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.

At the same time, the worshipper of images ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and of superhuman beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings, he is seen feeding, or pretending to feed them every morning and evening; and as in the hot season he is careful to fan them, so in the cold he is equally regardful of their comfort, covering them by day with warm clothing and placing them at night in a snug bed. But superstition does not find a limit here: the acts and speeches of the idols, and their assumption of various shapes and colours, are gravely related by the Brahmans, and with all the marks of veneration are firmly believed by their deluded followers. Other practices they have with regard to those idols which decency forbids me to explain. In thus endeavouring to remove a mistake, into which I have reason to believe many European gentlemen have been led by a benevolent wish to find an excuse for the errors of my countrymen, it is a considerable gratification to me to find that the latter have begun to be so far sensible of the absurdity of their real belief and practices, as to find it convenient to shelter them under such a cloak, however flimsy and borrowed. The adoption of such a subterfuge encourages me greatly to hope, that they will in time abandon what they are sensible cannot be defended; and that, forsaking the superstition of idolatry, they will embrace the rational worship of the God of Nature, as enjoined by the Vedas and confirmed by the dictates of common sense.

The argument which is frequently alleged in support of idolatry is that " those who believe God to be omnipresent, as declared by " the doctrines of the Vedanta, are required by the tenets of such " belief to look upon all existing creatures as God, and to shew divine " respect to birds, beasts, men, women, vegetables, and all other " existences; and as practical conformity to such doctrines is almost " impossible, the worship of figured gods should be admitted." This misrepresentation, I am sorry to observe, entirely serves the purpose intended, by frightening Hindus in general from attending to the pure worship of the Supreme Regulator of the universe. But I am confident that the least reflection on the subject will clear up this point beyond all doubt; for the Vedanta is well known as a work which inculcates only the unity of God; but if every existing creature should be taken for a god by the followers of the Vedanta, the doctrines of that work must be admitted to be much more at variance with that idea than those of the advocates of idolatry, as the latter are contented with the recognition of only a few millions of gods and goddesses, but the Vedanta in that case must be supposed to admit the divinity of every living creature in nature. The fact is, that the Vedanta by declaring that "God is everywhere, and everything is in God," means that nothing is absent from God, and nothing bears real existence except by the volition of God, whose existence is the sole support of the conceived existence of the universe, which is acted upon by him in the same manner as a human body is by a soul. But God is at the same time quite different from what we see or feel.

The following texts of the Vedanta are to this effect [11th text of the 2nd section of the 3rd chapter of the Vedanta]: "That being, which is distinct from matter, and from those "which are contained in matter, is not various, because he is " declared by all the Vedas to be one beyond description;" and again, "The Veda has declared the Supreme Being to be mere understand-"ing." Moreover, if we look at the conduct of the ancient true believers in God, as Janaka, the celebrated prince of Mithila, Vasisht'ha, Sanaka, Vyasa, Sankaracharya, and others whose characters as believers in one God are well known to the public by their doctrines and works, which are still in circulation, we shall find that these teachers, although they declared their faith in the omnipresent God according to the doctrines of the Vedanta, assigned to every creature the particular character and respect he was entitled to. It is, how-

ever, extremely remarkable, that the very argument which they employ to shew the impossibility of practical conformity to faith in the omnipresence of God, may be alleged against every system of their own idolatry; for the believers in the godhead of Krishna, and the devotees of Kali, as well as the followers of Siva, believe firmly in the omnipresence of Krishna,* Kali,† and Siva,‡ respectively. The authorities, then, for the worship of those gods, in declaring their omnipresence, would according to their own argument, enjoin the worship of every creature as much as of those supposed divinities. Omnipresence, however, is an attribute much more consonant with the idea of a Supreme Being than with that of any fictitious figure to which they pay divine honours! Another argument is, that "No man "can have, as it is said by the Sastra, a desire of knowledge respecting "the Supreme Being, unless his mind be purified; and as idol-worship "purifies men's minds, it should be therefore attended to." I admit the truth of the first part of this argument, as a desire of the acquisition of a knowledge of God is an indication of an improved mind; consequently whenever we see a person possessed of that desire, we should attribute it to some degree of purification; but I must affirm with the Veda, that purity of mind is the consequence of divine worship, and not of any superstitious practices.

The Brihadaranyaka says, "Adore God alone." Again, "Nothing "excepting the Supreme Being should be adored by wise men." "God alone rules the mind and relieves it from impurity."

The last of the principal arguments which are alleged in favour of idolatry is, that it is established by custom. "Let the authors of "the Vedas, Puranas, and Tantras," it is said, "assert what they may "in favour of devotion to the Supreme Being, but idol-worship has "been practised for so many centuries that custom renders it proper "to continue that worship." It is however evident to every one possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite different from divine faith; the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the fruit of vulgar caprice.

What can justify a man, who believes in the inspiration of his religious books, in neglecting the direct authorities of the same

* *Vide* 10th chapter of the Gita.
† *Vide* 23rd text of the 11th chap. of the Devi-mahatmya.
‡ *Vide* Rudra-mahatmya in the Dana-dharma.

works, and subjecting himself entirely to custom and fashion, which are liable to perpetual changes and depend upon popular whim? But it cannot be passed unnoticed that those who practise idolatry and defend it under the shield of custom, have been violating their customs almost every twenty years, for the sake of little convenience, or to promote their worldly advantage: a few instances which are most commonly and publicly practised, I beg leave to state here.

1st. The whole community in Bengal, with very few exceptions, have, since the middle of last century, forsaken their ancient modes of the performance of ceremonial rites of religion, and followed the precepts of the late Raghunandan, and consequently differ in the most essential points of ceremonies from the natives of Behar, Tirhoot, and Benares. *2nd.* The system of their sub-divisions in each caste, with the modes of marriage and intermarriage, is also a modern introduction altogether contrary to their law and ancient customs. *3rd.* The profession of instructing European gentlemen in the Vedas Smritis and Puranas, is a violation of their long established custom and, *4th.* The supplying their European guests with wine and victuals in presence of their gods and goddesses is also a direct breach of custom and law. I may conclude this subject with an appeal to the good sense of my countrymen, by asking them, "whose advice appears the most disinterested and most rational—that of those who, concealing your scriptures from you, continually teach you thus, 'Believe whatever we may say—don't examine or even touch your scriptures, neglect entirely your reasoning faculties—do not only consider us, whatever may be our principles, as gods on earth, but humbly adore and propitiate us by sacrificing to us the greater part (if not the whole) of your property:' or that of the man who lays your scriptures and their comments as well as their translations before you, and solicits you to examine their purport, without neglecting the proper and moderate use of reason; and to attend strictly to their directions, by the rational performance of your duty to your sole Creator, and to your fellow-creatures, and also to pay true respect to those who think and act righteously." I hope no one can be so prejudiced as to be unable to discern which advice is most calculated to lead him to the best road to both temporal and eternal happiness.

INTRODUCTION.

THE physical powers of man are limited, and when viewed comparatively, sink into insignificance; while in the same ratio, his moral aculties rise in our estimation, as embracing a wide sphere of action, and possessing a capability of almost boundless improvement. If the short duration of human life be contrasted with the great age of the universe, and the limited extent of bodily strength with the many objects to which there is a necessity of applying it, we must necessarily be disposed to entertain but a very humble opinion of our own nature; and nothing perhaps is so well calculated to restore our self-complacency as the contemplation of our more extensive moral powers, together with the highly beneficial objects which the appropriate exercise of them may produce.

On the other hand, sorow and remorse can scarcely fail, sooner or later, to be the portion of him who is conscious of having neglected opportunities of rendering benefit to his fellow-creatures. From considerations like these it has been that I (although born a Brahman, and instructed in my youth in all the principles of that sect), being thoroughly convinced of the lamentable errors of my countrymen, have been stimulated to employ every means in my power to improve their minds, and lead them to the knowledge of a purer system of morality. Living constantly amongst Hindoos of different sects and professions, I have had ample opportunity of observing the superstitious puerilities into which they have been thrown by their self-interested guides, who, in defiance of the law as well as of common sense, have succeeded but too well in conducting them to the temple of idolatry; and while they hid from their view the true substance of morality, have infused into their simple hearts a weak attachment for its mere shadow.

For the chief part of the theory and practice of Hindooism, I am sorry to say, is made to consist in the adoption of a peculiar mode of diet; the least aberration from which (even though the conduct of the offender may in other respects be pure and blameless) is not only visited with the severest censure, but actually punished by exclusion

from the society of his family and friends. In a word, he is doomed to undergo what is commonly called loss of caste.

On the contrary, the rigid observance of this grand article of Hindoo faith is considered in so high a light as to compensate for every moral defect. Even the most atrocious crimes weigh little or nothing in the balance against the supposed guilt of its violation.

Murder, theft, or perjury, though brought home to the party by a judicial sentence, so far from inducing loss of caste, is visited in their society with no peculiar mark of infamy or disgrace.

A trifling present to the Brahman, commonly called *Prayaschit*, with the performance of a few idle ceremonies, are held as a sufficient atonement for all those crimes; and the delinquent is at once freed from all temporal inconvenience, as well as all dread of future retribution.

My reflections upon these solemn truths have been most painful for many years. I have never ceased to contemplate with the strongest feelings of regret, the obstinate adherence of my countrymen to their fatal system of idolatry, inducing, for the sake of propitiating their supposed Deities, the violation of every humane and social feeling. And this in various instances; but more especially in the dreadful acts of self-destruction and the immolation of the nearest relations, under the delusion of conforming to sacred religious rites. I have never ceased, I repeat, to contemplate these practices with the strongest feelings of regret, and to view in them the moral debasement of a race who, I cannot help thinking, are capable of better things; whose susceptibility, patience, and mildness of character, render them worthy of a better destiny. Under these impressions, therefore, I have been impelled to lay before them genuine translations of parts of their scripture, which inculcates not only the enlightened woship of one God, but the purest principles of morality, accompanied with such notices as I deemed requisite to oppose the arguments employed by the Brahmans in defence of their beloved system. Most earnestly do I pray that the whole may, sooner or later, prove efficient in producing on the minds of Hindus in general, a conviction of the rationality of believing in and adoring the Supreme Being only; together with a complete perception and practice of that grand and comprehensive moral principle—*Do unto others as ye would be done by.*

ISA UPANISHAD

OF THE

YAJUR VEDA.

1st. ALL the material extension in this world, whatsoever it may be, should be considered as clothed with the existence of the Supreme regulating spirit: by thus abstracting thy mind *from worldly thoughts*, preserve thyself *from self-sufficiency*, and entertain not a covetous regard for property belonging to any individual.

2nd. Let man desire to live a whole century, practising, in this world, during that time, religious rites, because for such A SELFISH MIND AS THINE, besides the observance of these rites, there is no other mode the practice of which would not subject thee to evils.

3rd. THOSE THAT NEGLECT THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE SUPREME SPIRIT, *either by devoting themselves solely to the performance of the ceremonies of religion, or by living destitute of religious ideas* SHALL *after death*, ASSUME THE STATE OF DEMONS, *such as that of the celestial gods, and of other created beings*, WHICH ARE SURROUNDED WITH THE DARKNESS OF IGNORANCE.

4th. The Supreme Spirit is one and unchangeable: he proceeds more rapidly than the comprehending power of the mind: Him no external sense can apprehend, for a knowledge of him outruns even the internal sense: He though free from motion, seems to advance, leaving behind human intellect, which strives to attain a knowledge respecting him: He being the eternal ruler, the atmosphere regulates under him the whole system of the world.

5th. He, the Supreme Being, seems to move everywhere, although he in reality has no motion; he seems to be distant *from those who have no wish to attain a knowledge respecting him*, and he seems to be near *to those who feel a wish to know him*: but, in fact, He pervades the internal and external parts of this whole universe.

6th. He, who perceives the whole universe in the Supreme Being (*that is, he who perceives that the material existence is merely dependent upon the existence of the Supreme Spirit*); and who also perceives the Supreme Being in the whole universe (*that is, he who perceives that*

the Supreme Spirit extends over all material extension); does not feel contempt *towards any creature whatsoever*.

7th. When a person possessed of true knowledge conceives that God extends over the whole universe (*that is, that God furnishes every particle of the universe with the light of his existence*), how can he, as an observer of the real unity of the pervading Supreme existence, be affected with infatuation or grievance?

8th. He overspreads all creatures: is merely spirit, without the form either of any minute body, or of an extended one, which is liable to impression or organization: He is pure, perfect, omniscient, the ruler of the intellect, omnipresent, and the self-existent: He has from eternity been assigning to all creatures their respective purposes.

9th. Those observers of religious rites that perform only the worship of the sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and the other creatures, without regarding the worship of celestial gods, shall enter into the dark regions: and those practisers of religious ceremonies who habitually worship the celestial gods only, disregarding the worship of the sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, shall enter into a region still darker than the former.

10th. It is said that adoration of the celestial gods produces one consequence; and that the performance of the worship of sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, produce another: thus have we heard from learned men who have distinctly explained the subject to us.

11th. Of those observers of ceremonies, whosoever, knowing that the adoration of celestial gods, as well as the worship of the sacred fire, and oblation to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, should be observed alike by the same individual, performs them both, will, by means of the latter, surmount the obstacles presented by natural temptations, and will attain the state of the celestial gods through the practice of the former.

12th. Those observers of religious rites who worship Prakriti* alone, shall enter into the dark region: and those practisers of religious ceremonies that are devoted to worship solely the prior operating sensitive particle, allegorically called Brahma, shall enter into a region much more dark than the former.

*Prakriti (or nature) who though insensible, influenced by the Supreme Spirit, operates throughout the universe.

13th. It is said that one consequence may be attained by the worship of Brahma, and another by the adoration of Prakriti. Thus have we heard from learned men who have distinctly explained the subject to us.

14th. Of those observers of ceremonies, whatever person, knowing that the adoration of Prakriti and that of Brahma should be together observed by the same individual, performs them both, will, by means of the latter, overcome indigence, and will attain the state of Prakriti, through the practice of the former.

15th. "Thou hast, O sun," (*says to the sun a person agitated on the approach of death, who during his life attended to the performance of religious rites, neglecting the attainment of a knowledge of God,*) "thou hast, O sun, concealed by thy illuminating body the way to "the true Being, who rules in thee. Take off that veil for the guidance of me thy true devotee."

16th. "O thou" (continues he), "who nourishest the *world,* "movest singly and who dost regulate the *whole mundane* system— "O sun, son of Kasyapa, disperse thy rays for my passage, and with- "draw thy violent light, so that I may by thy grace behold thy most "prosperous aspect." "*Why should I*" (*says he, again retracting himself on reflecting upon the true divine nature*) "*why should I* "*entreat the sun, as* I AM WHAT HE IS," *that is,* "*the Being who rules* "*in the sun rules also in me.*"

17th. "Let my breath," *resumes he,* "be absorbed *after death* "into the wide atmosphere; and let this my body be burnt to ashes. "O my intellect, think *now on what may be beneficial to me.* O fire, "remember what religious rites I have hitherto performed."

18th. "O illuminating fire," *continues he,* "observing all our "religious practices, carry us by the right path to the enjoyment of "the consequence of our deeds, and put an end to our sins; we being "now unable to perform thy various rites, offer to thee our last "salutation."*

*This example from the Vedas, of the unhappy agitation and wavering of an idolater on the approach of death, ought to make men reflect seriously on the miserable consequence of fixing their mind on any other object of adoration but the one Supreme Being.

A

TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

OF A

SUNSKRIT TRACT,

INCULCATING

THE DIVINE WORSHIP;

ESTEEMED

BY THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE REVELATION OF THE VEDS AS MOST APPROPRIATE TO THE NATURE OF

THE SUPREME BEING.

CALCUTTA:

1827.

PRESCRIPT

FOR

OFFERING SUPREME WORSHIP

BY MEANS OF

THE GAYATRI,

THE MOST SACRED TEXT OF THE VEDAS.

THUS says the illustrious Manu: "The three great immutable "words (Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah, or Earth, Space, Heaven)", preceded by the letter Om;* and also the "Gayatri, consisting of three measured "lines, must be considered as the entrance to divine bliss."†

* Om, when considered as one letter uttered by the help of one articulation, is the symbol of the Supreme Spirit. It is derived from the radical अव् to preserve with the affix मन्. "One letter (Om) is the emblem of the most High."—*Manu*, II. 83. "This one letter, Om, is the emblem of the Supreme Being."—*Bhagavadgita*. It is true that this emblem conveys two sounds, that of *o* and of *m*, nevertheless it is held to be one letter in the above sense; and we meet with instances even in the ancient and modern languages of Europe that can justify such privileges; such as Ξ (Xi) and ψ (Psi) reckoned single letters in Greek, and Q, W, X, in English and others. But when considered as a triliteral word consisting of अ, उ, म, Om implies, the three Vedas, the three states of human nature, the three divisions of the universe, and the three deities, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, agents in the creation, preservation, and destruction of this world; or, properly speaking, the three principal attributes of the Supreme Being personified as Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. In this sense it implies, in fact, the universe controlled by the Supreme Spirit.

In all the Hindoo treatises of philosophy (the Puranas or didactic parables excepted), the methodical collection or expansion of matter is understood by the term creation, the gradual or sudden perversion of order is intended by destruction, and the power which wards off the latter from the former is meant by preservation.

The reason the authors offer for this interpretation is, that they in common with others, are able to acquire a notion of a Superintending Power, though unfelt and invisible, solely through their observation of material phenomena; and that should they reject this medium of conviction, and force upon themselves a belief of the production of matter from nothing, and of its liability to entire annihilation, then nothing would remain in the ordinary course of reasoning to justify their maintaining any longer a notion of that unknown Supreme Superintending Power.

† The last clause admits of another interpretation, viz., "must be considered as the mouth, *or principal part* of the Vedas."

"Whoever shall repeat them day by day, for three years, without "negligence, shall approach the most High God, become *free* as air, "and *acquire after death* an ethereal essence."

"From the three Vedas the most exalted Brahma successively "milked out the three lines of this sacred text, beginning with *the* "*word* Tat and entitled Savitri or Gayatri."

Yogi Yajnavalkya also declares, "By means of Om Bhuh, "Bhuvah, and Swah; and the Gayatri, collectively, or each of the "three singly, the most High God, the source of intellect, should be "worshipped."

So Brahma himself formerly defined Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah, (Earth, "Space, Heaven) as the body of the Supreme Intelligence; hence "these *three words* are called the Defined."

[Those that maintain the doctrine of the Universe being the body of the Supreme Spirit, found their opinion upon the following considerations :--

1st. That there are innumerable millions of bodies, properly speaking worlds, in the infinity of space.

2ndly. That they move, mutually preserving their regular intervals between each other, and that they maintain each other by producing effects primary or secondary, as the members of the body support each other.

3rdly. That those bodies, when viewed collectively, are considered one, in the same way as the members of an animal body or of a machine, taken together, constitute one whole.

4thly. Any material body whose members move methodically, and afford support to each other in a manner sufficient for their preservation, must be actuated either by an internal guiding power named the soul, or by an external one as impulse.

5thly. It is maintained that body is as infinite as space, because body is found to exist in space as far as our perceptions, with the naked eye or by the aid of instruments, enable us to penetrate.

6thly. If body be infinite as space, the power that guides its members must be internal, and therefore styled the SOUL, and not external, since there can be no existence even in thought without the idea of location.

Hence this sect suppose that the Supreme all-pervading power is the soul of the universe, both* existing from eternity to eternity; and

* The human soul and the Supreme Spirit.--ED.

that the former has somewhat the same influence over the universe as the individual soul has over the individual body.

They argue further, that in proportion as the internally impelled body is excellent in its construction, the directing soul must be considered excellent. Therefore, inasmuch as the universe is infinite in extent, and is arranged with infinite skill, the soul by which it is animated must be infinite in every perfection.]

He (Yajnavalkya) again expounds the meaning of the Gayatri in three passages:

" We, say the adorers of the Most High, meditate on the supreme " and omnipresent internal spirit of this splendid Sun. We meditate " on the same Supreme Spirit, earnestly sought for by such as dread " further mortal birth; who residing in every body as the all-per- " vading soul and controller of the mind, constantly directs our " intellect and intellectual operations towards *the acquisition of* virtue, " wealth, physical enjoyment, and final beatitude."

So, at the end of the Gayatri, the utterance of the letter Om is commanded by the sacred passage cited by Guna-Vishnu: " A " Brahman shall in every instance pronounce Om, at the beginning " and at the end; for unless the letter Om precede, *the desirable* " *consequence* will fail; and unless it follow, it will not be long " retained."

That the letter Om, which is pronounced at the beginning and at the end *of the Gayatri* expressly signifies the Most High, is testified by the Veda: *viz.*, " Thus through the help of Om, you contemplate " the Supreme Spirit." (*Mundaka Upanishad.*)

Manu also calls to mind the purport of the same passage: " And " rites obtained in the Veda, such as oblation to fire and solemn " offerings, pass away; but the letter Om is considered that which " passes not away; since it is *a symbol of* the most High the Lord of " created beings."

" By the sole repetition *of Om and the Gayatri*, a Brahman may " indubitably attain beatitude. Let him perform or not perform any " other religious rites, he being a friend *to all creatures* is styled a " knower of God."

So Yogi Yajnavalkya says: " God is declared to be the object " signified, and Om to be the term signifying: By means of a " knowledge even of the letter Om, the symbol, God becomes propi- " tious."

In the Bhagavadgita: "Om* (the cause), Tat† (that), Sat‡ (existing), " these are considered three kinds of description of the Supreme Being."

In the concluding part of the commentary on the Gayatri by the ancient Bhatta Guna-Vishnu, the meaning of the passage is briefly given by the same author.

"He the spirit who is thus described, guides us. He, as the soul "of the three mansions (*viz.*, earth, space and heaven), of water, light, "moisture, and the individual soul of all moving and fixed objects, "and of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, the sun and other gods of various "descriptions, the Most High God, illuminating, like a brilliant lamp, "the seven mansions, having carried my individual soul, as spirit, to "the seventh heaven, the mansion of the worshippers of God called "the True mansion, the residence of Brahma, absorbs it (my soul), "through his divine spirit, into his own divine essence. The worship-"per, thus contemplating, shall repeat the Gayatri."

Thus it is said by Raghunandan Bhattacharya, a modern expounder of law in the country of Gaur, when interpreting the passage beginning with "Pranava Vyahritibhyam:"§ "By means of pro-"nouncing Om and Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah, and the Gayatri, all "signifying the Most High, and reflecting on their meaning, the "worship of God shall be performed, and his grace enjoyed."

And also in the Maha Nirvana Tantra: "In like manner, among "all texts the Gayatri is declared to be the most excellent: the "worshipper shall repeat it when inwardly pure, reflecting on the "meaning of it. If the Gayatri be repeated with Om and the "Vyahriti (*viz.*, Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah), it excels all other theistical "knowledge, in producing immediate bliss. Whosoever repeats it in

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* "Om" implies the Being on whom all objects, either visible or invisible, depend in their formation, continuance, and change.

† "Tat" implies the Being that can be described only by the demonstrative pronoun "that," and not by any particular definition.

‡ "Sat" implies what "truly exists" in one condition independent of others. These three terms collectively imply, that the object contemplated through "Om" can be described only as "that" which "is existing."

The first term "Om" bears a striking similarity, both in sound and application, to the participle "ων" of the ve rb *ειμι to be*, in Greek; and it is therefore not very improbable that one might have had its origin from the other. As to the similarity in sound, it is too obvious to require illustration; and a reference to the Septuagint will shew that ων like "Om" is applied to Jehova the ever existing God. Exodus, iii, 14. "Εγω ειμι ὁ Ων" "ὁ Ων απεσταλκε με προς ὑμας."

§ प्रणवव्याहृतिभ्याम् || ओं भूः भुवः स्वः

"the morning or evening or during the night, while meditating on "the Supreme Being, being freed from all past sins, shall not be "inclined to act unrighteously. The worshipper shall first pronounce "Om, then the three Vyahritis, and afterwards the Gayatri of three "lines, and shall finish it with the term Om. We meditate on him "from whom proceed the continuance, perishing, and production *of* "*all things* : who spreads over the three mansions ; that eternal Spirit, "who inwardly rules the sun and all living creatures ; most desirable "and all-pervading ; and who, residing in intellect, directs the opera- "tions of the intellectual power of all of us material beings. The "worshipper, by repeating every day these three texts expressing the "above meaning, attains all desirable objects without any other "religious observance or austerity. 'One only without a second' is "the doctrine maintained by all the Upanishads : that imperishable "and incomprehensible Being is understood by these three texts. "Whoever repeats them once or ten, or a hundred times, either alone "or with many others, attains bliss in a proportionate degree. "After he has completed the repetition, he shall again meditate on "Him who is one only without a second, and all-pervading : thereby "all religious observances, though not performed, shall have been "virtually performed. Any one, whether a householder or not, "whether a Brahman or not, all have equal right to the use of these "texts as found in the Tantra."

Here Om, in the first instance, signifies that Supreme Being who is the sole cause of the continuance, perishing, and production of all worlds. "He from whom these creatures are produced, by whom "those that are produced exist, and to whom after death they return, "is the Supreme Being, whom thou dost seek to know."—The text of the Veda quoted by the revered Sankara Acharya in the Commentary on the first text of the Vedanta Darsana.

The doubt whether or not that cause signified by "Om" exists separately from these effects, having arisen, the second text, Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah, is next read, explaining that God, the sole cause, eternally exists pervading the universe, "Glorious, invisible, perfect, "unbegotten, pervading all, internally and externally, is He *the Supreme* "*Spirit.*"—*Mundaka Upanishad.*

It being still doubted whether or not living creatures large and small in the world act independently of that sole cause, the Gayatri, as the third in order, is read. "Tat Savitur varenyam, Bhargo

"devasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayat." We meditate on that indescribable spirit inwardly ruling the splendid Sun, the express object *of worship*. He does not only inwardly rule the sun, but he, the spirit, residing in and inwardly ruling all us material beings, directs mental operations towards their objects. "He who inwardly rules the sun is the same immortal spirit who inwardly rules thee."—*Chhandogya Upanishad.* "God resides in the heart of all creatures." —*Bhagavadgita.*

The object signified by the three texts being one, their repetition collectively is enjoined. The following is their meaning in brief:—

"We meditate on the cause of all, pervading all, and internally "ruling all material objects, from the sun down to us and others."

[The following is a literal translation of the Gayatri according to the English idiom: "We meditate on that Supreme Spirit of the splendid sun who directs our understandings."

The passage, however, may be rendered somewhat differently by transferring the demonstrative "that" from the words "Supreme Spirit" to the words "splendid sun." But this does not appear fully to correspond with the above interpretation of Yajnavalkya].

While translating this essay on the Gayatri, I deemed it proper to refer to the meaning of the text as given by Sir William Jones, whose talents, acquisitions, virtuous life, and impartial research, have rendered his memory an object of love and veneration to all. I feel so much delighted by the excellence of the translation, or rather the paraphrase, given by that illustrious character, that with a view to connect his name and his explanation of the passage with this humble treatise, I take the liberty of quoting it here.

The interpretation in question is as follows:—

"THE GAYATRI, OR HOLIEST VERSE OF THE VEDAS."

"Let us adore the supremacy of that divine sun,* the god-head † who illuminates all, "who recreates all, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to "direct our understandings aright in our progress toward his holy seat

* * * *

"What the sun and light are to this visible world, that are the *Supreme good* and *truth* "to the intellectual and invisible universe; and, as our corporeal eyes have a distinct "perception of objects enlightened by the sun, thus our souls acquire certain knowledge, "by meditating on the light of truth, which emanates from the Being of beings: "*that* is the light by which alone our minds can be directed in the path to beatitude."

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* Opposed to the visible luminary.

† *Bhargas*, a word consisting of three consonants, derived from *bha*, to shine; *ram*, to delight; *gam*, to move.

A DEFENCE

OF

HINDOO THEISM,

IN REPLY TO THE

ATTACK OF AN ADVOCATE FOR

IDOLATRY AT MADRAS.

CALCUTTA:

1817.

A DEFENCE

OF

HINDOO THEISM.*

Before I attempt to reply to the observations that the learned gentleman, who signs himself Sankara Sastri, has offered in his letter of the 26th December last, addressed to the Editor of the *Madras Courier*, on the subject of an article published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, and on my translation of an abridgment of the Vedanta and of the two chapters of the Vedas, I beg to be allowed to express the disappointment I have felt in receiving from a learned Brahman controversial remarks on Hindoo Theology written in a foreign language, as it is the invariable practice of the natives of all provinces of Hindoostan to hold their discussions on such subjects in Sanskrit, which is the learned language common to all of them, and in which they may naturally be expected to convey their ideas with perfect correctness and greater facility than in any foreign tongue : nor need it be alleged that, by adopting this established channel of controversy, the opportunity of appealing to public opinion on the subject must be lost, as a subsequent translation from the Sanskrit into English may sufficiently serve that purpose. The irregularity of this mode of proceeding, however, gives me room to suspect that the letter in question is the production of the pen of an English gentleman, whose liberality, *I suppose*, has induced him to attempt an apology even for the absurd idolatry of his fellow-creatures. If this inference be correct, while I congratulate that gentleman on his progress in a knowledge of the sublime doctrines of the Vedanta, I must, at the same

* "The year 1817 saw further progress of the movement. Rammohun's publications now began to call forth learned and animated replies from the defenders of Hinduism. The *Madras Courier*, in December, 1816, contained a long letter from the head English master in the Madras Government College, Sankara Sastri, controverting Rammohun's views as shown in his writings, and pleading for the worship of Divine attributes as virtual deities. Rammohun reprinted this letter with a masterly reply entitled *A Defence of Hindoo Theism,......*".—Miss Collet's *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. 23

time, take the liberty of entreating that he will, for the future, prefer consulting the original works written upon those doctrines, to relying on the second-hand information on the subject, that may be offered him by any person whatsoever.

The learned gentleman commences by objecting to the terms *discoverer* and *reformer*, in which the Editor of the *Calcutta Gazette* was pleased to make mention of me. He states, "That people of "limited understanding, not being able to comprehend the system "of worshipping the invisible Being, have adopted false doctrines, "and by that means confounded weak minds in remote times; but "due punishment was inflicted on those heretics, and religion was "very well established throughout India by the Reverend Sankara-"charya and his disciples, who, however, did not pretend to *reform* "or *discover* them, or assume the title of a *reformer* or *discoverer*." In none of my writings, nor in any verbal discussion, have I ever pretended to reform or to discover the doctrines of the unity God, nor have I ever assumed the title of reformer or discoveror; so far from such an assumption, I have urged in every work that I have hitherto published, that the doctrines of the unity of God are real Hindooism, as that religion was practised by our ancestors, and as it is well-known even at the present age to many learned Brahmans: I beg to repeat a few of the passages to which I allude.

In the introduction to the abridgment of the Vedanta I have said: "In order, therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that of *our fore-"fathers*, I have been endeavouring, for some time past, to convince "my countrymen of the *true meaning of our sacred* books, and prove "that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some un-"reflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me." In another place of the same introduction: "The present is an en-"deavour to render an abridgment of the same (the Vedanta) into "English, by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that "the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion, have "nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates." In the introduction of the Kenopanishad: "This work will, I trust, by explaining to "my countrymen *the real spirit of the Hindoo scriptures which is* "*but the declaration of the unity of God*, tend in a great degree "to correct the erroneous conceptions which have prevailed with "regard to the doctrines they inculcate:" and in the Preface of the

Isopanishad: "*Many learned Brahmans* are perfectly aware of the "absurdity of idol-worship, and *are well informed of the nature of the* "*pure mode of divine worship.*" A reconsideration of these passages will, I hope, convince the learned gentleman, that I never advanced any claim to the title either of a reformer or of a discoverer of the doctrines of the unity of the Godhead. It is not at all impossible that from the perusal of the translations above alluded to, the Editor of the *Calcutta Gazette*, finding the system of idolatry into which Hindoos are now completely sunk, quite inconsistent with the real spirit of their scriptures, may have imagined that their contents had become entirely forgotten and unknown; and that I was the first to point out the absurdity of idol-worship, and to inculcate the propriety of the pure divine worship, ordained by their Vedas, their Smritis, and their Puranas. From this idea, and from finding in his intercourse with other Hindoos, that I was stigmatized by many, however unjustly, as an *innovator*, he may have been, not unnaturally, misled to apply to me the epithets of discoverer and reformer.

2ndly. The learned gentleman states: "There are an immense "number of books, namely, Vedas, Sastras, Puranas, Agams, Tantras, "Sutras, and Itihas, besides numerous commentaries, compiled by "many famous theologians, both of ancient and modern times, "respecting the doctrines of the worship of the invisible Being. They "are not only written in Sanskrit, but rendered into the Prakrita, "Telugu, Tamil, Gujrati, Hindoostani, Marhatti, and Canari langu-"ges, and immemorially studied by a great part of the Hindu nation, "attached to the adwaitam faith, &c." This statement of the learned gentleman, as far as it is correct, corroborates indeed my assertion with respect to the doctrines of the worship of the inivsible Supreme Spirit being unanimously inculcated by all the Hindoo Sastras, and naturally leads to severe reflctions on the selfishness which must actuate those Brahmanical teachers who, notwithstanding the unanimous authority of the Sastras for the adoption of pure worship, yet, with the view of maintaining the title of God which they arrogate to themselves and of deriving pecuniary and other advantages from the numerous rites and festivals of idol-worship, constanly advance and encourage idolatry to the utmost of their power. I must remark, however, that there is no translation of the Vedas into any of the modern languages of Hindoostan with which I am acquainted, and it is for that reason that I have translated into Bengali the Vedanta, the Kenopanishad of

the Sama Veda, the Isopanishad of the Yajur Veda, &c., with the contents of which none but the learned among my countrymen were at all acquainted.

3rdly. The learned gentleman states, that the translations of the scripture into the vulgar language are rejected by some people; and he assigns as reasons for their so doing, that "if the reader of them doubts "the truth of the principles explained in the translatior. the divine "knowledge he acquired by them becomes a doubtful faith, and "that doubt cannot be removed unless he compare them with the "original work: in that case, the knowledge he lastly acquired be-"comes superior, and his study, in the first instance, becomes useless "and the cause of repeating the same work." When a translation of a work written in a foreign tongue is made by a person at all acquainted with that language into his native tongue, and the same translation is sanctioned and approved of by many natives of the same country, who are perfectly conversant with that foreign language, the translation, I presume, may be received with confidence as a satisfactory interpretation of the original work, both by the vulgar and by men of literature.

It must not be supposed, however, that I am inclined to assert that there is not the least room to doubt the accuracy of such a translation; because the meaning of authors, even in the original works, is very frequently dubious, especially in a language like Sanskrit, every sentence of which, almost, admits of being explained in different senses. But should the possibility of errors in every translation be admitted as reason for withholding all confidence in their contents, such a rule would shake our belief, not only in the principles explained in the translation of the Vedanta into the current language, but also in all information respecting foreign history and theology obtained by means of translations: in that case, we must either learn all the languages that are spoken by the different nations in the world, to acquire a knowledge of their histories and religions, or be content to know nothing of any country besides our own. The second reason which the learned gentleman assigns for their objection to the translation is, that "Reading the scripture in the vulgar languages is prohibited by the Puranas." I have not yet met with any text of any Puranas which prohibit the explanation of the scripture in the vulgar tongue; on the contrary, the Puranas allow that practice very frequently I repeat one of these declarations from the Siva Dharma,

quoted by the great Raghunandana. "He who can interpret, according "to the ratio of the understanding of his pupils, through Sanskrit, or "through the vulgar languages, or by means of the current language "of the country, is entitled, spiritual father." Moreover, in every part of Hindoostan all professors of the Sanskrit language instructing beginners in the Vedas, Puranas, and in other Sastras, interpret them in the vulgar languages; especially spiritual fathers in the exposition of those parts of the Vedas and Puranas, which allegorically introduce a plurality of gods and idol-worship, doctrines which tend so much to their own worldly advantage.

The learned gentleman states, that "The first part of the Veda "prescribes the mode of performing *yagam* or sacrifice, bestowing "*danam* or alms; treats of penance, fasting, and of worshipping the "incarnations, in which the Supreme Deity has appeared on the "earth for divine purposes. The ceremonies performed according "to these modes, forsaking their fruits, are affirmed by the Vedas to "be mental exercises and mental purifications necessary to obtain "the knowledge of the divine nature." I, in common with the Vedas and the Vedanta, and Manu (the first and best of Hindoo lawgivers) as well as with the most celebrated Sankaracharya, deny these ceremonies being necessary to obtain the knowledge of the divine nature, as the Vedanta positively declares, in text 36, section 4th, chapter 3rd: "Man may acquire the true knowledge of God, even without observ"ing the rules and rites prescribed by the Veda for each class: as it "is found in the Veda that many persons who neglected the perform"ance of the rites and ceremonies, owing to their perpetual attention "to the adoration of the Supreme Being, acquired the true knowledge "respecting the Supreme Spirit." The Veda says: "Many learned "true believers never worshipped fire, or any celestial gods through "fire." And also the Vedanta asserts, in the 1st text of the 3rd section "of the 3rd chapter: The worship authorized by all the Vedas is "one, as the directions for the worship of the only Supreme Being are "invariably found in the Veda, and the epithets of the Supreme and "Omnipresent Being, &c., commonly imply God alone." Manu, as I have elsewhere quoted, thus declares on the same point, chapter 12th, text 92nd: "Thus must the chief of the twice-born, though he neglect "the ceremonial rites mentioned in the Sastra, be diligent in attaining "a knowledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in "repeating the Veda." Again, chapter 4th, text 23rd: "Some constantly

"sacrifice their breath in their speech, *when they instruct others of* "*God aloud*, and their speech in their breath, *when they meditate in* "*silence*; perceiving in their speech and breath thus employed, the imperishable fruit of a sacrificial offering." 24th: "Other Brahmans "incessantly perform those sacrifices only, seeing with the eye of "divine learning, that the scriptural knowledge is the root of every ceremonial observance." And also the same author declares in chapter 2nd, text 84: "All rites ordained in the Veda, oblations to fire "and solemn sacrifices, pass away; but that which passes not away "is declared to be the syllable Om, thence called Akshara since it "is a symbol of God, the Lord of created beings."

5thly. The learned gentleman states, that "the difficulty of "attaining a knowledge of the Invisible and Almighty Spirit is "evident from the preceding verses." I agree with him in that point, that the attainment of perfect knowledge of the nature of the God-head is certainly difficult, or rather impossible; but to read the existence of the Almighty Being in his works of nature, is not, I will dare to say, so difficult to the mind of a man possessed of common sense, and unfettered by prejudice, as to conceive artificial images to be possessed, at once, of the opposite natures of human and divine beings, which idolaters constantly ascribe to their idols, strangely believing that things so *constructed* can be converted by ceremonies into *constructors* of the universe.

6thly. The learned gentleman objects to our introducing songs, although expressing only the peculiar tenets of monotheism, and says: "But the holding of meetings, playing music, singing songs, and "dancing, which are ranked among carnal pleasures, are not ordained "by scripture, as mental purification." The practice of dancing in divine worship, I agree, is not ordained by the scripture, and accordingly never was introduced in our worship; any mention of dancing in the *Calcutta Gazette* must, therefore, have proceeded from misinformation of the Editor. But respecting the propriety of introducing monotheistical songs in the divine worship, I beg leave to refer the gentleman to texts 114th and 115th of the 3rd chapter of Yajnavalkya, who authorizes not only scriptural music in divine contemplation, but also the songs that are composed by the vulgar. It is also evident that any interesting idea is calculated to make more impression upon the mind, when conveyed in musical verses, than when delivered in the form of common conversation.

7thly. The learned gentleman says: "All the Brahmans in this "peninsula are studying the same Vedam as are read in the other "parts of the country; but I do not recollect to have read or heard "of one treating on astronomy, medicine, or arms: the first is indeed "an angam of the Vedam, but the two latter are taught in separate "Sastras."—in answer to which I beg to be allowed to refer the gentleman to the following text of the Nirvana: "The Vedas,* while "talking of planets, botany, austere duties, arms, rites, natural con-"sequences, and several other subjects, are purified by the inculcation "of the doctrines of the Supreme Spirit." And also to the latter end of the Mahanirvana agam.

From the perusal of these texts, I trust, he will be convinced that the Vedas not only treat of astronomy, medicine, and arms, but also of morality and natural philosophy, and that all arts and sciences that are treated of in other Sastras, were originally introduced by the Vedas: see also Manu, chapter 12, verses 97 and 98. I cannot of course be expected to be answerable for Brahmans neglecting entirely the study of the scientific parts of the Veda, and putting in practice, and promulgating to the utmost of their power, that part of them which, treating of rites and festivals, is justly considered as the source of their worldly advantages and support of their alleged divinity.

8thly. I observe, that on the following statement in my Introduction to the Kenopanishad, *viz.*, "Should this explanation given by "the Veda itself, as well as by its celebrated commentator, Vyasa, "not be allowed to reconcile those passages which are seemingly at "variance with each other, as those that declare the unity of the "invisible Supreme Being, with others which describe a plurality of "independent visible gods, the whole work must, I am afraid, not "only be stripped of its authority, but looked upon as altogether "unintelligible," the learned gentleman has remarked that "To say "the least of this passage, RAM MOHUN ROY appears quite as willing "to abandon as to defend the Scripture of his Religion."

In the foregoing paragraph, however, I did no more than logically confine the case to two points, *viz.*, that the explanation of the Veda and of its commentators must either be admitted as sufficiently reconciling the apparent contradictions between different passages of the Veda or must not be admitted. In the latter case, the Veda must necessarily be supposed to be inconsistent with itself, and therefore altogether unintelligible, which is directly contrary to the

faith of Hindus of every description; consequently they must admit that those explanations do sufficiently reconcile the seeming contradictions between the chapters of the Vedas.

9thly. The learned gentleman says that "Their (the attributes "and incarnations) worship under various representations, by means "of consecrated objects, is prescribed by the scripture to the human "race, by way of mental exercises," &c. I cannot admit that the worship of these attributes under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, has been prescribed by the Veda to the HUMAN RACE; as this kind of worship of consecrated objects is enjoined by the Sastra to those only who are incapable of raising their minds to the notion of an invisible Supreme Being. I have quoted several authorities for this assertion in my Preface to the Isopanishad, and beg to repeat here one or two of them: "The vulgar look for their God in "water; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies; the "ignorant in wood, bricks, and stones; but learned men in the "Universal Soul." "Thus corresponding to the nature of different "powers or qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the "benefit of those *who are not possessed of sufficient understanding.*" Permit me in this instance to ask, whether every Mussulman in Turkey and Arabia, from the highest to the lowest, every Protestant Christian at least of Europe, and many followers of Kabir and Nanak, do worship God without the assistance of consecrated objects? If so, how can we suppose that the human race is not capable of adoring the Supreme Being without the puerile practice of having recourse to visible objects?

10thly. The learned gentleman is of opinion that the attributes of God exist distinctly from God and he compares the relation between God and these attributes to that of a king to his ministers, as he says: "If a person be desirous to visit an earthly prince, he "ought to be introduced in the first instance by his ministers," &c.; and "in like manner the grace of God ought to be obtained by "the grace through the worship of his attributes." This opinion, I am extremely sorry to find, is directly contrary to all the Vedanta doctrines interpreted to us by the most revered Sankaracharya, which are real adwaita or non-duality; they affirm that God has no second that may be possessed of eternal existence, either of the same nature with himself or of a different nature from him, nor any second of that nature that might be called either his part or his

quality. The 16th text of the 2nd section of the 3rd chapter: "The "Veda has declared the Supreme Being to be mere understanding." The Veda says; "God is real existence, wisdom and eternity." The Veda very often calls the Supreme Existence by the epithets of Existent, Wise, and Eternal; and assigns as the reason for adopting such epithets, that the Veda in the first instance speaks of God according to the human idea, which views quality separately from person, in order to facilitate our comprehension of objects. In case these attributes should be supposed, as the learned gentleman asserts, to be separate existences, it necessarily follows, that they must be either eternal or non-eternal. The former case, *viz.* the existence of a plurality of beings imbued like God himself with the property of eternal duration, strikes immediately at the root of all the doctrines relative to the unity of the Supreme Being contained in the Vedanta. By the latter sentiment, namely, that the power and attributes of God are not eternal, we are led at once into the belief that the nature of God is susceptible of change, and consequently that He is not eternal, which makes no inconsiderable step towards atheism itself. These are the obvious and dangerous consequences, resulting from the learned gentleman's doctrine that the attributes of the Supreme Being are distinct existences. I am quite at a loss to know how these attributes of the pure and perfect Supreme Being (as the learned gentleman declares them to exist really and separately, and not fictitiously and allegorically,) can be so sensual and destitute of morality as the creating attribute or Brahma is said to be by the Puranas, which represent him in one instance as attempting to commit a rape upon his own daughter. The protecting attribute, or Vishnu, is in another place affirmed to have fraudulently violated the chastity of Brinda, in order to kill her husband. Siva, the destroying attribute, is said to have had a criminal attachment to Mohini disregarding all ideas of decency. And a thousand similar examples must be familiar to every reader of the Puranas. I should be obliged by the learned gentleman's showing how the contemplation of such circumstances, which are constantly related by the worshippers of these attributes, even in their sermons, can be instrumental towards the purification of the mind, conducive to morality, and productive of eternal beatitude. Besides, though the learned gentleman in this instance considers these attributes to be separate existences, yet in another place he seems to view them as parts of the Supreme Bein,.

as he says: "If one part of the ocean be adored, the ocean is adored." I am somewhat at a loss to understand how the learned gentleman proposes to reconcile this apparent contradiction. I must observe, however, in this place, that the comparison drawn between the relation of God and those attributes, and that of a king and his ministers, is totally inconsistent with the faith entertained by Hindoos of the present day; who, so far from considering these objects of worship as mere instruments by which they may arrive at the power of contemplating the God of nature, regard them in the light of independent gods, to each of whom, however absurdly, they attribute almighty power, and a claim to worship, solely on his own account.

11thly. The learned gentleman is dissatisfied with the objection mentioned in my translation to worshipping these fictitious representations, and remarks, that "the objections to worshipping the attributes are not satisfactorily stated by the author." I consequently repeat the following authorities, which I hope may answer my purpose. The following are the declarations of the Veda; "He "who worships any God excepting the Supreme Being, and thinks "that he himself is distinct and inferior to that God, knows nothing, "and is considered as a domestic beast of these gods." "A state "even so high as that of Brahma does not afford real bliss." "Adore "God alone." "None but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped; "nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man." I repeat also the following text of the Vedanta: "The declaration of the 'Veda, that those that worship the celestial gods are the food of 'such gods, is an allegorical expression, and only means, that they are 'comforts to the celestial gods as food to mankind; for he who has "no faith in the Supreme Being is rendered subject to these gods. "The Veda affirms the same."

And the revered Sankaracharya has frequently declared the state of celestial gods to be that of demons, in the Bhashya of the Isopanishad and of others.

To these authorities a thousand others might be added. But should the learned gentleman require some practical grounds for objecting to the idolatrous worship of the Hindoos, I can be at no loss to give him numberless instances, where the ceremonies that have been instituted under the pretext of honouring the all-perfect Author of Nature, are of a tendency utterly subversive of every moral principle.

I begin with Krishna as the most adored of the incarnations, the number of whose devotees is exceedingly great. His worship is made to consist in the institution of his image or picture, accompanied by one or more females, and in the contemplation of his history and behaviour, such as his perpetration of murder upon a female of the name of Putana; his compelling a great number of married and unmarried women to stand before him denuded; his debauching them and several others, to the mortal affliction of their husbands and relations; his annoying them, by violating the laws of cleanliness and other facts of the same nature. The grossness of his worship does not find a limit here. His devotees very often personify (in the same manner as European actors upon stages do) him and his female companions, dancing with indecent gestures, and singing songs relative to his love and debaucheries. It is impossible to explain in language fit to meet the public eye, the mode in which Mahadeva, or the destroying attribute, is worshipped by the generality of the Hindoos; suffice it to say, that it is altogether congenial with the indecent nature of the image, under whose form he is most commonly adored.

The stories respecting him which are read by his devotees in the Tantras, are of a nature that, if told of any man, would be offensive to the ears of the most abandoned of either sex. In the worship of Kali, human sacrifices, the use of wine, criminal intercourse and licentious songs are included: the first of these practices has become generally extinct; but it is believed that there are parts of the country where human victims are still offered.

Debauchery, however, universally forms the principal part of the worship of her followers. Nigam and other Tantras may satisfy every reader of the horrible tenets of the worshippers of the two latter deities. The modes of worship of almost all the inferior deities are pretty much the same. Having so far explained the nature of worship adopted by Hindoos in general, for the propitiation of their allegorical attributes, in direct opposition to the mode of pure divine worship inculcated by the Vedas, I cannot but entertain a strong hope that the learned gentleman, who ranks even monotheistical songs among carnal pleasures, and consequently rejects their admittance in worship, will no longer stand forward as an advocte for the worship of separate and independent attributes and incarnations.

12thly. The learned gentleman says, "that the Saviour," meaning Christ, "should be considered a personification of the mercy and kindness of God (I mean actual not allegorical personification)." From the little knowledge I had acquired of the tenets of Christians and those of anti-Christians, I thought there were only three prevailing opinions respecting the nature of Christ. *viz.*. that he was considered by some as the expounder of the laws of God, and the mediator between God and man; by many to be one of the three mysterious persons of the Godhead; whilst others, such as the Jews, say that he was a mere man. But to consider Christ as a personification of the mercy of God is, if I mistake not, a new doctrine in Christianity, the discussion of which, however, has no connexion with the present subject. I, however, must observe that this opinion, which the learned gentleman has formed of Christ being a personification of the mercy of God, is similar to that entertained by Mussulmans, for a period of upwards of a thousand years, respecting Mohummud, whom they call the mercy of God upon all his creatures. The learned gentleman, in the conclusion of his observations, has left, as he says, the doctrines of pure allegory to me. It would have been more consistent with justice had he left pure allegory also to the Vedas, which declare, "appellations and figures of all kinds are innovations," and which have allegorically represented God in the figure of the universe: "Fire is his head, the sun and the moon are his two eyes," &c.; and which have also represented all human internal qualities by different earthly objects; and also to Vyasa who has strictly followed the Vedas in these figurative representations, and to Sankaracharya, who also adopted the mode of allegory in his Bhashya of the Vedanta and of the Upanishads.

A
SECOND DEFENCE
OF
THE MONOTHEISTICAL SYSTEM
OF
THE VEDS;
IN REPLY TO
AN APOLOGY FOR THE PRESENT STATE
OF
HINDOO WORSHIP.

CALCUTTA:

1817.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Two publications only have yet appeared with the professed object of defending Hindoo idolatry against the arguments which I have adduced from the Vedanta and other sacred authorities, in proof of the erroneousness of that system. To the first, which appeared in a Madras journal, my reply has been for some time before the public. The second, which is the object of the present answer, and is supposed to be the production of a learned Brahman* now residing in Calcutta, was printed both in Bengali and in English; and I have therefore been under the necessity of preparing a reply in both of those languages. That which was intended for the perusal of my countrymen, issued from the press a few weeks ago. For my European readers I have thought it advisable to make some additional remarks to those contained in the Bengali publication, which I hope will tend to make my arguments more clear and intelligible to them than a bare translation would do.

* "Another defender of Hinduism appeared some months later in the head Pandit of the Government College at Calcutta, Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar, who published a tract entitled *Vedanta Chandrika*."—Miss Collet's *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. 23.

A
SECOND DEFENCE.

&c. &c.

The learned Brahman, in his defence of idolatry, thus begins: "Let it not be supposed that the following treatise has been written "with a view to refute the doctrines of those assuming inventors and "self-interested moderns," &c. "It is solely with the intention of "expressing the true meaning of these authorities that this brief "treatise has been composed;" and he thus concludes: "The Vedanta "Chandrika, or lunar light of the Vedanta, has thus been made "apparent, and thus the glow-worm's light has been eclipsed." It is very much to be feared that, from the perusal of this treatise, called the lunar light of the Vedanta, but filled up with* satirical fables,† abusive expressions, and contradictory assertions, sometimes admitting monotheism, but at the same time blending with it and defending polytheism,‡ those foreign gentlemen, as well as those natives of this country who are not acquainted with the real tenets of the Vedanta, might on a superficial view form a very unfavourable opinion of that theology, which, however, treats with perfect consistency of the unity and universality of the Supreme Being, and forbids, positively, treating with contempt or behaving ill towards any creature whatsoever.

As to the satire § and abuse, neither my education permits any return by means of similar language, nor does the system of my religion admit even a desire of unbecoming retaliation: situated as I am, I must bear them tranquilly.

Besides, a sect of people who are apt to make use of the most foul language, when they feel angry with their supposed deities,|| cannot

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* P. 1, l. 26; p. 2, l. 17; pp. 19 and 20, margin.

† P. 1; p. 3, l. 9; p. 8, l. 17; p. 38, l. 14: p. 48, l. 19, &c. &c.

‡ P. 13, l. 14.

§ Vide the "Apology," passim.

|| As may be observed when at the annual festival of Jagannath, the car in which he is conveyed happens to be impeded in its progress by any unseen obstacle. In this case, the difficulty is supposed to be occasioned by the malicious opposition of that god, on whom the most gross abuse is liberally bestowed by his devotees.

of course be expected, when irritated with contradiction, to pay due attention, unless checked by fear, to the propriety of the use of decent expressions, either in common conversation or in religious controversy

The total sum of the arguments, set forth as far as page 13, of the translation of this treatise (however inconsistent they are with each other), seems intended to prove that faith in the Supreme Being, when united with moral works, leads men to eternal happiness.

This doctrine, I am happy to observe, strongly corroborates every assertion that I have made in my translation, a few paragraphs of which I beg leave to repeat here for the satisfaction of my readers. In the abridgment of the Vedanta, page 14: "The Vedanta shews "that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God, *viz.*, a com- "mand over passions and over the external senses of the body, and "good acts are declared by the Veda to be indispensable in the mind's "approximation to God; they should therefore be strictly taken care "of, and attended to both previously and subsequently to such approxi- "mation to the Supreme Being; that is to say, we should not indulge "our evil propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control "over them: reliance on, and self-resignation to the only true Being, "with an aversion to worldly considerations, are included in the good "acts above alluded to." In the introduction to the *Isopanishad* (page 74): "Under these impressions, therefore, I have been impelled "to lay before them genuine translations of parts of their scriptures, "which inculcate not only the enlightened worship of One God, but "the purest principles of morality." But the learned Brahman asserts, in two instances, among arguments above noticed, that the worship of a favoured deity and that of an image are also considered to be acts of morality. The absurdity of this assertion will be shown afterwards, in considering the subject of idol-worship. To English readers, however, it may be proper to remark, that the Sanskrit word which signifies *works*, is not to be understood in the same sense as that which it implies in Christian theology, when works are opposed to faith. Christians understand by works, actions of *moral merit*, whereas Hindus use the term in their theology only to denote religious rites and ceremonies prescribed by Hindu lawgivers, which are often irreconcilable with the commonly received maxims of moral duty; as, for instance, the crime of suicide prescribed to widows by Angira, and to pilgrims at holy places by the *Narasinha* and *Kurma*

Puranas. I do not, therefore, admit that works, taken in the latter sense (that is, the different religious acts prescribed by the Sastra to the different classes of Hindus respectively) are necessary to attain divine faith, or that they are indispensable accompaniments of holy knowledge; for the Vedanta in chapter 3rd, section 4th, text 37th, positively declares that the true knowledge of God may be acquired without observing the rules and rites prescribed by the Sastra to each class of Hindus; and also, examples are frequently found in the Veda of persons, who, though they neglected the performance of religious rites and ceremonies, attained divine knowledge and absorption by control over their passions and senses, and by contemplation of the Ruler of the universe. Manu, the first and chief of all Hindu lawgivers, confirms the same doctrines in describing the duties of laymen, in the texts 22nd 23rd and 24th of the 4th chapter of his work; and in the Bha'shya, or commentaries on the Isopanishad, and on the other Upanishads of the Vedas, the illustrious Sankaracharya declared the attainment of faith in God, and the adoration of the Supreme Being, to be entirely independent of Brahmanical ceremonies; and the Veda affirms that "many learned true "believers never worshipped fire, not any celestial god through fire." The learned Brahman, althoug he has acknowledged himself, in p. 9th, line 6th, of his treatise, that, "in the opinion of Sankara-"charya the attainment of absorption does not depend on works of "merit" (or, properly speaking, on religious rites), yet forgetting the obedience he has expressed to be due to the instruction* of that celebrated commentator, has immediately contradicted his opinion, when he says in p. 9, l. 9: "It has also been ascertained that acts of merit (Brahmanical rites) must be performed previously to the attainment of "divine knowledge;" for, if divine knowledge were to be dependent on the observance of Brahmanical rites, and absorption dependent on divine knowledge, it would follow necessarily that absorption would depend on Brahmanical rites, which is directly contrary to the opinion of the commentator quoted by the learned Brahman himself.

Moreover, the learned Brahman at first states (p. 11, l. 12) that "in the ancient writers we read that a knowledge of Brahma or "holy knowledge, is independent of acts" (religious rites); but he again contradicts this statement, and endeavours to explain it

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* P. 3, l. 14.

away (p. 11, l. 24): "Thus when the Sastras state that absorption "may be attained even though the sacrificial fires be neglected, "the praise of that holy knowledge is intended, but *not* the deprecia-"tion of meritorious acts" (Brahmanical rites). Here he chooses to accuse his scripture, and ancient holy writers, of exaggerated and extravagant praise of holy knowledge, rather than that the least shock should be given by their authority to the structure of paganism and idolatry. From this instance, the public may perceive how zealous the learned Brahman and his brethren are, in respect to the preservation of their fertile estate of idolatry, when they are willing to sacrifice to it even their own scriptural authorities.

Upon a full perusal of the treatise, it appears that the arguments employed by the learned Brahman have no other object than to support the weak system of idol-worship, inasmuch as he repeatedly declares, that the adoration of 330,000,000 dieties, especially the principal ones, such as Siva, Vishnu, Kali, Ganesa, the Sun and others, through their several images, has been enjoined by the Sastras, and sanctioned by custom. I am not a little surprised to observe, that after having perused my Preface to the *Isopanishad* in Bengali (of which during the last twelve months I have distributed nearly five hundred copies amongst all descriptions of Hindoos), the learned Brahman has offered no objection to what I have therein asserted, relative to the reason assigned by the same Sastras, as well for the injunction to worship these figured beings, as for the general prevalence of idol-worship in this country.

In that work, I admitted that the worship of these deities was directed by the Sastra; but, at the same time, I proved by their own authority, that this was merely a concession made to the limited faculties of the vulgar, with the view of remedying, in some degree, the misfortune of their being incapable of comprehending and adopting the spiritual worship of the true God. Thus, in the aforesaid Preface, I remarked: "For they (the "Puranas, Tantras, &c.) repeatedly declare God to be one, and above "the apprehension of the external and internal senses. They indeed "expressly declare the divinity of many gods and the mode of "their worship: but they reconcile those contradicting assertions "by affirming frequently, that the directions to worship any celes-"tial beings are only applicable to those who are incapable of "elevating their minds to the idea of an invisible being." And, with

the view to remove every doubt as to the correctness of my assertion, I at the same time quoted the most unquestionable authorities, a few of which I shall here repeat. "Thus corresponding to the natures of "different powers and qualities, numerous figures have been invented "for the benefit of those who are not possessed of sufficient under-"standing." "The vulgar look for their gods in water; men of more "extended knowledge, in celestial bodies; the ignorant, in wood, "bricks, and stones; but learned men in the Universal Soul." "It is "impossible for those who consider pilgrimage as devotion, and be-"lieve that the divine nature exists in the image, to look up to, com-"municate with, to petition, and to serve true believers in God,"

Such indeed is the prevalent nature of truth, that when to dispute it is impossible, the learned Brahman has not been always successful in concealing it, even when the admission is most fatal to his own argument. In p. 28, l. 34, he says: "But to those it is enjoined "who, from a *defective understanding*, do not perceive that God "exists in every thing, that they should worship him through the "medium of some created object." In making this acknowledgment, the learned Brahman has confirmed the correctness of all my assertions; though the evident conclusion is, that he and all his followers must either immediately give up all pretensions to understanding, or forsake idolatry.

In my former tract, I not only proved that the adoration of the Supreme Being in spirit was prescribed by the Veda to men of understanding, and the worship of the celestial bodies and their images to the ignorant, but I also asserted that the Veda actually prohibited the worship of any kind of figured beings by men of intellect and education. A few of the passages quoted by me in my former publication, on which this assertion rests, I also beg leave to repeat.

"He who worships any God except the Supreme Being, and thinks "that he himself is distinct and inferior to that God, knows nothing, "and is considered a domestic beast of these gods." "A state even "so high as that of Brahma, does not afford real bliss." "Adore God "alone. None but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped; nothing "excepting him should be adored by a wise man." I repeat also the following text of the Vedanta: "The declaration of the Veda, that "those that worship the celestial gods are the food of such gods, is "an allegorical expression, and only means that they are comforts to "the celestial gods, as food to mankind; for he who has no faith in the

"Supreme Being, is rendered subject to these gods; the Veda affirms "the same." No reply therefore is, I presume, required of me to the arguments adduced by the learned Brahman in his treatise for idol-worship; except that I should offer some additional authorities, confirming exclusively the rational worship of the true God, and prohibiting the worship of the celestial figures and their images. I beg leave accordingly to quote, in the first instance, a few texts of the Veda: "Men may acquire eternal beatitude, by obtaining a knowledge of the Supreme Being alone; *there is no other way* to salvation."* "To those that acquire a knowledge of Him, the Ruler of the intellec- "tual power, who is eternal amidst the perishable universe, and is the "source of sensation among all animate existences, and who alone "assigns to so many objects their respective purposes, everlasting "beatitude is allotted; but not to those who are not possessed of that knowledge."† And in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th texts of the *Kenopanishad*, the Veda has, five times successively, denied the divinity of any specific being which men in general worship; and has affirmed the divinity of that Being solely, who is beyond description and comprehension, and out of the reach of the power of vision, and of the sense of hearing or of smelling. The most celebrated Sankaracharya, in his commentary upon these texts, states that, lest people should suppose Vishnu, Mahadeva, Pavana, Indra, or any other, to be a supreme spirit, the Veda in this passage disavows positively the divinity of all of them. Again, the Veda says: "Those that neglect the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit, *either* "*by devoting themselves solely to the performance of the ceremonies* "*of religion, or by living destitute of religious ideas*, shall, after death, "assume the state of demons, *such as that of the celestial gods, and of* "*other created beings*, which are surrounded with the darkness of "ignorance."‡ It will not, I hope, be supposed inconsistent with the subject in question to mention in this place in what manner the Vedanta treats of these celestial gods, and how the Veda classes them among the other beings. The Vedanta (ch. 1st, s. 3rd, t. 26th) has the following passage: "Vyasa affirms that it is prescribed also to celestial "gods and heavenly beings to attain a knowledge of the Supreme "Being, because a desire of absorption is *equally* possible for them." And the Veda, in the *Mundaka Upanishad*, thus declares: "From

* Sukta. † Katha. ‡ Isopanishad.

"Him who knows all things generally and particularly, and who only "by his omniscience *created the universe*, Brahma, and whatever "bears appellation and figure as well as food, all are produced." "From Him (the Supreme Being) celestial gods* of many descriptions, "Siddhas or beings next to celestial gods, mankind, beasts, birds, life "wheat, and barley, all are produced." In the *Devi Mahatmya*, a work which is as much in circulation among the Hindoos as their daily prayerbook,† (ch. lst, ' 66th) the creation of Vishnu, Brahma. and Mahadeva, is most distinctly affirmed.

Manu, the best of all the commentators of the Vedas, says (chap. 12th, text 85th): "Of all those duties, answered Bhrigu, the principal "is to acquire *from the Upanishad* a true knowledge of the one Supreme "Spirit, that is, the most exalted of all sciences, because through that "knowledge eternal beatitude is obtained." And the same author, in the conclusion of his work on rites and ceremonies, thus directs (t. 92nd, ch. 12th): "Thus must the chief of the twice-born, though he neglect "the ceremonial rites mentioned in the Sastras, be diligent in attaining "a knowledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in repeat-"ing the Veda." In the *Kularnava*, "absorption is not to be effected "by the studies of the Vedas nor by the reading of other Sastras: "absorption is effected by a true knowledge of the Supreme Being. "O! Parvati, except that knowledge there is no other way to "absorption." "Caste or religious order belonging to each sect, is "not calculated to be the cause of eternal beatitude, nor is the study "of Darsanas or any other Sastras, sufficient to produce absorption: "a knowledge of the Supreme Spirit is alone the cause of eternal "beatitude." Mahanirvana: "He who believes that from the highest "state of Brahma to the lowest state of a straw, all are delusions, and "that the one Supreme Spirit is the only true being, attains beatitude." "Those who believe that the divine nature exists in any image made "of earth, stones, metal, wood, or of other materials, reap only dis-"tress by their austerities; but they cannot, without a knowledge of "the Supreme Spirit, acquire absorption."

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* The Veda, [illegible]ing in the first instance personified all the attributes and powers of the Deity, and also the celestial bodies and natural elements, does, in conformity to this [illegible]dea of pe[illegible], treat of them in the subsequent passage, as if they were real beings, ascribing to them birth, animation, senses, and accidents, as well as liability to annihilation.

† Puja Patal.

I am really sorry to observe that, notwithstanding these authorities and a thousand others of a similar nature, the learned Brahman appears altogether unimpressed by the luminous manner in which they inculcate the sublime simple spiritual belief in, and worship of, one God, and that, on the contrary, he should manifest so much zeal in leading people into an idolatrous belief in the divinity of created and perishable beings.

Idolatry, as now practised by our countrymen, and which the learned Brahman so zealously supports as conducive to morality, is not only rejected by the Sastras universally, but must also be looked upon with great horror by common sense, as leading directly to immorality and destructive of social comforts. For every Hindoo who devotes himself to this absurd worship, constructs for that purpose a couple of male and female idols, sometimes indecent in form, as representatives of his favourite deities; he is taught and enjoined from his infancy to contemplate and repeat the history of these, as well as of their fellow-deities, though the actions ascribed to them be only a continued series of debauchery, sensuality, falsehood, ingratitude, breach of trust, and treachery to friends.* There can be but one opinion respecting the moral conduct to be expected of a person, who has been brought up with sentiments of reverence to such beings, who refreshes his memory relative to them almost every day, and who has been persuaded to believe, that a repetition of the *holy name* of one of these deities,† or a trifling present to his image or to his devotee, is sufficient, not only to purify and free him from all crimes whatsoever, but to procure to him future beatitude.

As to the custom or practice to which the learned Brahman so often refers in defence of idolatry, I have already, I presume, explained in the Preface of the *Isopanishad*, the accidental circumstances which have caused idol-worship to flourish throughout the greater part of India; but, as the learned Brahman has not condescended to notice any of my remarks on this subject, I beg leave to repeat here a part of them.

" Many learned Brahmans are perfectly aware of the absurdity of
" idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the pure mode of
" divine worship; but as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of
" idolatry they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they

* *Vide* Note at the end.

† *Vide* note at the end

"not only never fail to protect idol-worship from all attacks, but "even advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by "keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest "of the people." And again: "It is, however, evident to every one "possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite different "from divine faith; the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities "and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the fruit of "vulgar caprice. What can justify a man, who believes in the in-"spiration of his religious books, in neglecting the direct authorities "of the same works, and subjecting himself entirely to custom and "fashion, which are liable to perpetual changes, and depend upon "popular whim? But it cannot be passed unnoticed, that those who "practise idolatry, and defend it under the shield of custom; have "been violating their customs almost every twenty years, for the sake "of a little convenience, or to promote their worldly advantages." Instances of this sort are mentioned in the Preface of the *Isopanishad*, and to those I beg leave to recall the attention of the learned Brahman.

Every reader may observe, that the learned Brahman in his treatise, written (as he says) on the doctrines of the Vedanta, has generally neglected to quote any authority for his assertions; and when he cites the Veda or the Vedanta (which he does sometimes) as his authority, he carefully omits to mention the text or part to which his assertion refers. The validity of theological controversy chiefly depends upon Scriptural authority, but when no authority is offered, the public may judge how far its credibility should extend. I shall, however, make a few remarks on the absurd and contradictory assertions with which the treatise abounds.

The learned Brahman observes:* "But if the divine essence "itself, and not the energy be extolled, it will be adored under the "forms of Brahma, Vishnu, and Indra, and other male deities." And in other places, (p. 30 l. 27) "So by paying adoration to any mate-"rial object, animate or inanimate, the Supreme Being himself is "adored." If the truth of the latter assertion be admitted (namely, that God himself is adored by the adoration of anything whatsoever), no mark of distinction between the adoration of any visible objects and male deities will exist; and the former assertion respecting the adoration of the Supreme Being through the male deities only, will appear an absurd restriction.

* P. 14, l. 14.

The learned Brahman states (p. 19, l. 31), that, "If you believe "on the authority of the Scriptures, that there is a Supreme Being, can "you not believe that he is united to matter ?" A belief in God is by no means connected with a belief of his being united to matter : for those that have faith in the existence of the Almighty, and are endued with common sense, scruple not to confess their ignorance as to his nature or mode of existence, in regard to the point of his relation to matter, or to the properties of matter. How, therefore, can a belief in God's being united to matter, be inferred as a necessary consequence of a belief in his existence? The learned Brahman again contradicts himself on this point, saying (P. 38, l. 19) : "The divine essence being "supernatural and immaterial, a knowledge of it is to be acquired "solely from revelations."

The learned Brahman (in p. 18, l. 4) states that : "A quality cannot "exist independently of its substance but substance may exist "independently of any quality." Every one possessed of sensation is convinced, that a substance is as much dependent on the possession of some quality or qualities for its existence, as a quality on some substance. It is impossible even to imagine a substance divested of qualities. Despoil it as much as you please, that of magnitude must still remain. I therefore trust that the public will not suppose the above-stated doctrines of the learned Brahman to have been derived from those of the Vedanta.

It is again stated (p. 21, l. 4), that "In point of fact if you "admit the existence of matter, as it regards yourself, with its "twenty-four accidents, as confirmed by universal experience, you "can easily conceive that the same properties belong to the Supreme "Being." It is easy enough for the learned Brahman to conceive that the twenty-four properties which are peculiar to animals and among which all sources of carnal pleasures are included, belong to his supposed deities ; but it is difficult, or rather impossible, for a man untainted with idolatrous principles, to ascribe to God all such properties as he allows to exist in himself.

The learned Brahman has drawn an analogy between the operation of the charms of the Vedas, and that of magic ; whereon he says (p. 18, l. 1) : "Cannot the charms of the Vedas operate as power- "fully as those of magic, in producing effects where the cause is not "present ?" If the foundation of the Vedas is held not to be stronger, as the learned Brahman seems to consider it, than that of magic, I

am afraid it will be found to rest on so slender a footing, that its doctrines will hardly be worth discussion.

In p. 24, l. 10, the learned Brahman states that "The Vedanta "itself, in treating of the several deities, declares them to be possessed "of forms, and their actions and enjoyments are all dependent on "their corporeal nature." But (p. 21, l. 19) he says: "Because the "male and female deities, whose beings I contend for, are nothing "more than accidents existing in the Supreme Being."

He thus at one time considers these deities as possessed of a corporeal nature, and at another declares them to be mere accidents in God, which is quite inconsistent with the attribute of corporeality. I am really at a loss to understand, how the learned Brahman could admit so dark a contradiction into his "*Lunar light of the Vedanta.*"

The learned Brahman (in p. 27, l. 6) thus assimilates the worship of the Supreme Being to that of an earthly king, saying: "Let us "drop the discourse concerning a Supreme and Invisible Being. Take "an earthly king. It is evident that to serve him there must be "the medium of materiality. Can service to him be accomplished "otherwise than by attendance on his person, praising his qualities, "or some similar method?" Those who believe God to be an almighty, omniscient, and independent existence, which, pervading the universe, is deficient in nothing; and also know the feeble and dependent nature of earthly kings, as liable to sudden ruin, as harassed by incessant cares and wants, ought never, I presume, to assimilate the contemplation of the Almighty power with any corporeal service acceptable to an earthly king. But as by means of this analogy, the learned Brahman and his brethren have successfully persuaded their followers to make in imitation of presents and bribes offered to princes, pecuniary vows to these supposed deities, to which it would seem none but the learned Brahman and his brethren have exclusive claim, —and as such analogy has thus become the source of their comforts and livelihood. I shall say no more upon so tender a subject.

He further observes (in p. 22, l. 27): "In reverting to the subject, "you affirm, that you admit the existence of matter in human beings, "because it is evident to your senses; but deny it with respect to "God, because it is not evident to your senses," &c.; and, "if this "be your method of reasoning, it would appear that your faith is

"confined to those objects only which are evident to your senses." As far as my recollection goes with respect to the contents of my publications, both in the native language and in English, I believe I never denied the materiality of God, on the mere ground of its not being evident to our senses. The assertion which I quoted, or made use of in my former treatise, is, that the nature of the God-head is beyond the comprehension of external and internal senses; which, I presume, implies neither the denial of the materiality of God, on the sole ground of his being invisible, nor the limitation of my faith merely to objects evident to the senses. For many things that far surpass the limits of our senses to perceive, or experience to teach, may yet be rendered credible, or even demonstrated by inferences drawn from our experience. Such as the mutual gravitation of the earth and moon towards each other, and of both to the sun; which facts cannot be perceived by any of our senses, but may be clearly demonstrated by reasoning drawn from our experience. Hence it appears, that a thing is justly denied only when found contrary to sense and reason, and not merely because it is not perceptible to the senses.

I have now to notice the friendly advice given me by the learned Brahman (in p. 23, l. 16): "But at all events, divest yourself of the "uneasy sensations you profess to experience at witnessing the "worship paid to idols, prepared at the expense and labour of "another." In thanking him for his trouble in offering me this counsel, I must, however, beg the learned Brahman to excuse me, while I acknowledge myself unable to follow it; and that for several reasons. 1st. A feeling for the misery and distress of his fellow-creatures is, to every one not overpowered by selfish motives, I presume, rather natural than optional. 2ndly. I, as one of their countrymen, and ranked in the most religious sect, of course participate in the disgrace and ridicule to which they have subjected themselves, in defiance of their scriptural authority, by the worship of idols, very often under the most shameful forms, accompanied with the foulest language, and most indecent hymns and gestures. 3rdly. A sense of the duty which one man owes to another, compels me to exert my utmost endeavours to rescue them from imposition and servitude, and promote their comfort and happiness.

He further observes (p. 30, l. 16). "In the like manner, the "King of kings is served equally by those worshippers who are "acquainted with His real essence, and by those who only recognize

'Him under the forms of the deities; but in the future distribution "of rewards a distinction will be made." As the learned Brahman confesses, that the same reward is not promised to the worshippers of figured deities as to the adorers of the Supreme Being, it seems strange that he should persist in alleging that God is truly worshipped in the adoration of figured gods; for if the worship be in both cases the same, the reward bestowed by a just God must be the same to both; but the rewards are not the same to both, and therefore the worship of figured deities cannot be considered equal to the adoration of God.

In the same page (l. 7), he compares God to a mighty emperor saying, "As a mighty emperor travels through his kingdom in the "garb of a peasant, to effect the welfare of his subjects, so the King "of kings pervades the universe, assuming a divine, or even a human "form, for the same benevolent purpose." This comparison seems extremely objectionable, and the inference from it totally inadmissible. For a king being ignorant of things out of the reach of his sight, and liable to be deceived respecting the secrets and private opinions of his subjects, may sometimes be obliged to travel through his kingdom, to acquire a knowledge of their condition, and to promote their welfare personally. But there can be obviously no inducement for an omnipotent being, in whose omniscience also the learned Brahman, I dare say, believes, to assume a form in order either to acquaint himself with the affairs of men, or to accomplish any benevolent design towards his creatures.

He again observes, that these figures and idols are representations of the true God, a sight of which serves, as he alleges, to bring that Being to his recollection (p. 30, l. 5): "They are as pictures, which "recall to the memory a dear and absent friend, or like the worship of the moon, reflected in various waters."

This observation of the learned Brahman induces me to suppose that he must have formed a notion of the Godhead quite strange and contemptible: for it is almost impossible for a man, who has a becoming idea of God's superiority to all creatures, to represent Him, as the Hindoos very often do, in a form so shameful that a description of it is prohibited by common decency, or in a shape so ridiculous as that piebald kite called Kshemankari. and that of another bird called Nilkanth, or of jackals, &c. And it is equally difficult to believe that a rational being can make use of such objects to bring the All-perfect Almighty Power to his recollection.

He further says (p. 31, l. 32): "If any one assert that the case is "otherwise, that the deities, mankind, the heavens, and other objects "have an existence independent of God, that faith in him is sufficient "without worship, that they (the deities) cannot meet with reverence, "how can that person affect to disbelieve the doctrine of independent "existence, or assert that he is a believer in universality or a follower of the Vedanta?" To acquit myself from such gross but unfounded accusation as that of my believing material existence to be independent of God, I repeat a few passages from the abridgment of the Vedanta. (P. 10, l. 29): "Nothing bears true existence excepting God." Again in l. 31, "The existence of whatever thing that appears "to us, relies on the existence of God." Besides, there is not, I am confident, a single assertion in the whole of my publications, from which the learned Brahman might justly infer that I believed in the independent existence of deities, mankind, the heavens, or other objects. The public, by an examination of these works, will be enabled to judge how far the learned Brahman has ventured to brave public opinion, in the invention of arguments for the defence of idolatry.

He again says (p. 34, l. 28): "If, by the practice of the prescrib-"ed forms in a church, a temple, or a mosque, God be worshipped "how can he be dishonoured by being worshipped under the form of "an image, however manufactured?" Those who contemplate God in a church or a mosque, or elevate their minds to a notion of the Almighty Power in any other appropriated place, for the sake of good example, never pay divine homage to those places; but those that pretend to worship God under the form of an image, consider it to be possessed of divine nature, and at the same time, most inconsistently, as imbued with immoral principles. Moreover, the promoters of the worship of images, by promulgating anecdotes illustrative of the supposed divine power of particular idols, endeavour to excite the reverence of the people, and specially of pilgrims, who, under these superstitious ideas, are persuaded to propitiate them with large sacrifices of money, and sometimes even by that of their own lives. Having so far entered into this subject, the learned Brahman will, I hope, be convinced of the impropriety of the analogy which he has drawn between a worship *within* a certain material object and a worship *of* a material object.

As to his question (p. 34, l. 32), "Is the sight of the image unpleasing?" My answer must be affirmative. It is extremelv natural

that, to a mind whose purity is not corrupted by a degrading superstition, the sight of images which are often of the most hedious or indecent description. and which must therefore excite disgust in the mind of the spectator, should be unpleasing. A visit to Kalighat,* or Burahnugur,† which are only four miles distant from Calcutta, will sufficiently convince the reader of the unpleasant nature of their beloved images. He again asks in the same page, (l. 33): "Will a "beloved friend be treated with disrespect by being seated on a chair, "when he arrives in your house, or by being presented with fragrant "flowers and other offerings?" To which I shall say, no; but at the same time I must assert that a friend worthy of reverence would not, we may be sure, be at all pleased at being exhibited semetimes in a form,‡ the bare mention of which would be considered as a gross insult to the decorous feelings of the public; and sometimes in the shape of a monkey,§ fish,|| hog,¶ or elephant,** or at being represented as destitute of every virtue, and altogether abandoned. Nor would he believe his host to be possessed of common sense, who, as a token of regard, would altogether neglect his guest, to go and lay fruits and flowers before his picture.

It is said (p. 39, l. 23): "In the accounts of ancient Greece we "meet with the worship of idols, and the practice of austerities; but "these acts have been contemned by the more enlightened moderns." I am really glad to observe that the learned Brahman, more liberally and plainly than could be expected, confesses that idolatry will be totally contemned as soon as the understanding is improved. I, however, beg leave to remark on this instance, that though the idolatry practised by the Greeks and Romans was certainly just as impure, absurd, and puerile as that of the present Hindoos, yet the former was by no means so destructive of the comforts of life, or injurious to the texture of society, as the latter The present Hindoo idolatry being made to consist in following certain modes and restraints of diet (which according to the authorities of the Mahabharata and other histories were never observed by their forefathers), has subjected its unfortunate votaries to entire separation from the rest of the world, and also from each other, and to constant inconveniences and distress.

* The temple of Kali.

† Where there are twelve temples dedicated to Siva.

‡ Under which Siva is adored.

§ Hanuman.

|| The first incarnation of Vishnu.

¶ The third incarnation of Vishnu.

** Ganesh.

A Hindoo, for instance, who affects particular purity,* cannot even partake of food dressed by his own brother, when invited to his house, and if touched by him while eating, he must throw away the remaining part of his meal. In fact, owing to the observance of such peculiar idolatry, directly contrary to the authorities of their scripture, they hardly deserve the name of social beings.

The learned Brahman further says (p. 23, l. 3): "If you affirm "that you are not an infidel, but that your arguments are in conformity "with those of the philosophers who were ignorant of the Vedas," &c. A remark of this kind cannot, I am sure, be considered as at all applicable to a person who has subjected himself to this writer's remarks only by translating and publishing the principal parts of the Veda, and by vindicating the Vedanta theology, and who never advanced on religious controversy any argument which was not founded upon the authorities of the Vedas and their celebrated commentators. It is, however, remarkable that, although the learned Brahman and his brethren frequently quote the name of the Vedas and other Sastras, both in writing and in verbal discussion, they pay little or no attention in practice to their precepts, even in the points of the most important nature, a few of which I beg leave to notice here.

1st. The adoration of the invisible Supreme Being, although exclusively prescribed by the Upanishads, or the principal parts of the Vedas, and also by the Vedanta, has been totally neglected, and even discountenanced, by the learned Brahman and his followers, the idol-worship, which those authorities permit only to the ignorant, having been substituted for that pure worship.

2ndly. Angira and Vishnu, and also the modern Raghunandana, authorize a widow to burn herself voluntarily along with the corpse of her husband; but modern Brahmans, in direct opposition to their authority, allow her relations to bind the mournful and infatuated widow to the funeral pile with ropes and bamboos, as soon as she has expressed a wish to perform the dreadful funeral sacrifice, to which the Brahmans lend a ready assistance.

3rdly. Although an acceptance of money or of a present in the marriage contract of a daughter is most strictly prohibited by the Vedas and by Manu (texts 98 and 100 of chap. 9), yet the sale of

* A person of this description is distinguished by the name of Swayampaka, one who is his own cook.

female children under pretence of marriage is practised by nearly two-thirds of the Brahmans of Bengal and Tirhoot, as well as by their followers generally.

4thly. Yajnavalkya has authorized the second marriage of a man, while his former wife is living; but only under certain circumstances of misconduct or misfortune in the latter, such as the vice of drinking wine, of deception, of extravagance, of using disagreeable language, or shewing manifest dislike towards her husband, long protracted and incurable illness, barrenness, or producing only female offspring. In defiance, however, of this restraint, some of them marry thirty or forty women, either for the sake of money got with them at marriage, or to gratify brutal inclinations. Madhosingh, the late Rajah of Tirhoot, through compassion towards that helpless sex, limited, I am told, within these thirty or forty years, the Brahmans of that district to four wives only. This regulation, although falling short both of the written law and of that of reason, tends to alleviate in some measure the misery to which women were before exposed, as well as to diminish in some degree domestic strife and disturbance.

5thly. According to the authority of Manu (text 155, chap. 2nd), respect and distinction are due to a Brahman, merely in proportion to his knowledge; but on the contrary amongst modern Hindoos, honour is paid exclusively to certain families of Brahmans, such as the Kulins, &c., however void of knowledge and principle they may be. This departure from law and justice was made by the authority of a native prince of Bengal, named Ballalsen, within the last three or four hundred years And this innovation may perhaps be considered as the chief source of that decay of learning and virtue, which, I am sorry to say may be at present observed. For wherever respectability is confined to birth only, acquisition of knowledge, and the practice of morality, in that country, must rapidly decline.

The learned Brahman objects to the term *indescribable*, although universally assigned to the Supreme Being by the Veda and by the Vedanta theology, saying (p. 37, l. 20), "It is a wonderful interpreta-"tion of the Vedanta to say that God is indescribable, although ex-"isting, unless indeed he be looked upon as the production of magic; "as existing in one sense, and non-existent in another." And again l. 14) "He, therefore, who asserts that the Supreme Being is "indescribable and at the same time existing, must conceive that He, "like the world is mutable," &c.,—in answer to which I beg to refer

the learned Brahman to the 11th text of the third Brahmana of the 4th chapter of the Brihadaranyaka, the principal part of the Yajur Veda, as commented upon by the celebrated Sankaracharya: "The Veda "having so far described God, by various absolute* and relative "epithets,† was convinced of its incapability of giving a real "description of the nature of the Godhead: language can convey a "notion of things only either by the appellations by which they are "already known, or by describing their figure, accidents, genus, and "properties; but God has none of these physical circumstances: the "Veda therefore attempted to explain him in negative terms;" (that is by declaring that whatever thing may be perceived by the mental faculties, or the external senses, is not God.) "The Veda's "ascribing to God attributes of eternity, wisdom, truth, &c., shews "that it can explain him only by ascribing those attributes, and "applying those epithets that are held by men in the highest estima- "tion, without intending to assert the adequacy of such description. "He is the only true existence amidst all dependent existences, and "the true source of our senses." Also in the 3rd text of the Kenopanishad; "Hence no vision can approach him; no language can "describe him; no intellectual power can compass or determine him. "We know nothing of how the Supreme Being should be explained: "He is beyond nature, which is above comprehension: our ancient "*spiritual parents* have thus explained Him to us." It cannot, however, be inferred, from our acknowledged ignorance of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, that we are equally ignorant as to His existence. The wonderful structure and growth of even so trifling an object as a leaf of a tree, affords proof of an almighty Superintendent of the universe; and even the physical world affords numerous instances of things whose existence is quite evident to our senses, but of whose nature we can form no conception; such as the causes of the sensations of heat and vision.

The learned Brahman attempts to prove the impossibility of an adoration of the Deity, saying (p. 33, l. 15): "That which cannot be conceived, cannot be worshipped." Should the learned Brahman consider a full conception of the nature, essence, or qualities of the Supreme Being, or a physical picture truly representing the Almighty power, with offerings of flowers, leaves, and viands, as essential to

* As eternal, true and intelligent.
† As creator, preserver, and destroyer.

adoration, I agree with the learned Brahman with respect to the impossibility of the worship of God. But, should adoration imply only the elevation of the mind to he conviction of the existence of the Omnipresent Deity, as testified by His wise and wonderful works, and continual contemplation of His power a so displayed, together with a constant sense of the gratitude which we naturally owe Him, for our existence, sensation, and comfort,—I never will hesitate to assert, that His adoration is not only possible, and practicable, but even incumbent upon every rational creature. For further explanation, I refer the learned Brahman to the text 47, sect. 4. chap. 3, of the Vedanta.

To his question.* "What are you yourselves?" I suppose I may safely reply for myself, that I am a poor dependent creature—subject, in common with others, to momentary changes, and liable to sudden destruction.

At p. 45, l. 30, the learned Brahman, if I rightly understand his object, means to insinuate, that I have adopted the doctrines of those who deny the responsibility of man as a moral agent. I am quite at a loss to conceive from what part of my writings this inference has been drawn, as I have not only never entertained such opinions myself, but have taken pains to explain the passage in the Veda on which this false doctrine is founded In page 69 of the Preface to the Isopanishad, I have said that, "the Vadanta by declaring that "God is everywhere, and every thing is in God, means that nothing "is absent from God and that nothing bears real existence except by "the volition of God." And again, in the same page I quoted the example of the most revered teachers of the Vedanta doctrine, who, "although they declared their faith in the Omnipresent God, accord-"ing to the doctrines of the Vedanta, assigned to every creature the "particular character and respect he was entitled to."

I omitted to notice the strange mode of argument which the learned Brahman (at p. 29) has adopted in defence of idolatry. After acknowledging that the least deficiency in judgment renders man incapable of looking up to an Omnipresent Supreme Being, whereby he mistakes a created object for the great Creator, he insinuates that an erroneous notion in this respect is as likely to lead to eternal happiness, as a knowledge of truth. At l. 5, he says : "And "although a person through deficiency in judgment, should be unable

* P. 47, l. 4.

"to discover the real nature of a thing, does it follow, that his error "will prevent the natural effect from appearing? When a man in "a dream sees a tiger, is he not in as much alarm as if he saw it "in reality?"

This mode of claiming for idol-worship a value equal to that of pure religion, which it can never be admitted to possess, may have succeeded in retaining some of his followers in the delusive dream, from which he is so anxious that they should not be awoke. But some of them have, I know, begun to inquire into the truth of those notions in which they have been instructed; and these are not likely to mistake for true, the false analogy that is in the above passage attempted to be drawn, nor will they believe that, however powerful may be the influence of imagination, even under false impressions future happiness, which depends on God alone, can ever be ranked amongst its effects. Such enquirers will, I hope, at last become sensible that the system of *dreaming* recommended by the learned Brahman, however essential to the interests of himself and of his caste, can bring to them no advantage, either substantial or eternal.

As instances of the erroneous confidence which is placed in the repetition of the name of a god to effect purification from sins, noticed by me in p. 168, I may quote the following passages.

"He who pronounces "Doorga" (the name of the goddess), though he constantly practise adultery, plunder others of their property, or commit the most heinous crimes, is freed from all sins."*

"A person pronouncing loudly, "reverence to Hari," even involuntarily, in the state of falling down, slipping, of labouring under illness, or of sneezing, purifies himself from the foulest crimes.†"

"He who contemplates the Ganges, while walking, sitting, sleeping, thinking of other things, awake, eating, breathing, and conversing, is delivered from sins.‡"

The circumstances alluded to in p. 168 of this treatise, relative to the wicked conduct of their supposed deities, are perfectly familiar to every individual Hindoo. But those Europeans who are not acquainted with the particulars related of them, may perhaps feel a wish to be in possession of them. I, therefore, with a view to gratify their curiosity and to vindicate my assertion, beg to be allowed to mention a few instances in point, with the authorities on which they rest. As I have already noticed the debauchery of Krishna, and his ross

*Vide Durga-nama-Mahatmya †Vide Bhagavata ‡Vide Maha-Bharata.

ensuality, and that of his fellow-deities, such as Siva and Brahma, in the 147th, 148th and 150th pages of my reply to the observations of Sankar Sastri, instead of repeating them here, I refer my readers to that reply, also to the tenth division of the Bhagavata, to the Harivansa or last division of the Maha-Bharata, and to the Nigams, as well as to the several Agams, which give a detailed account of their lewdness and debauchery. As to falsehood, their favourite deity Krishna is more conspicuous than the rest. Jara-Sandha, a powerful prince of Behar, having heard of the melancholy murder of his son-in-law perpetrated by Krishna, harrassed, and at last drove him out of the place of his nativity (Mathura) by frequent military expeditions. Krishna, in revenge, resolved to deprive that prince of his life by fraud, and in a most unjustifiable manner. To accomplish his object, he and his two cousins, Bhima and Arjuna, declared themselves to be Brahmans and in that disguise entered his palace; where, finding him weakened by a religious fast, and surrounded only by his family and priests, they challenged him to fight a duel. He accordingly fought Bhima, the strongest of the three, who conquered and put him to death.—*Vide Sabha Parba or second Book of the Maha-Bharata.* Krishna again persuaded Yudhisthira, his cousin, to give false evidence in order to accomplish the murder of Drona, their spiritual father.—*Vide Drona Parba, or seventh Book of the Maha-Bharata.*

Vishnu and others combined in a conspiracy against Bali, a mighty emperor; but finding his power irresistible, that deity was determined to ruin him by stratagem, and for that purpose appeared to him in the shape of a dwarf, begging alms. Notwithstanding Bali was warned of the intention of Vishnu, yet, impressed with a high sense of generosity, he could not refuse a boon to a beggar; that a grateful deity in return not only deprived him of his whole empire, which he put himself in possession of by virtue of the boon of Bali, but also inflicted on him the disgrace of bondage and confinement in Patal.—*Vide latter part of the Hari-vansa or last book of the Maha-Bharata.*

When the battle of Kurukshetra was decided by the fatal destruction of Duryodhana, the remaining part of the army of his rival, Yudhisthira, returned to the camp to rest during the night, under the personal care and protection of Mahadeva. That deity having, however, been cajoled by the flattery offered him by Aswatthama, one of the friends of the unfortunate Duryodhana, not only allowed him

to destroy the whole army that was asleep under the confidence of his protection, but even assisted him with his sword to accomplish his bloody purpose.—*Vide Saushuntika Parba, or eleventh book of the Maha-Bharata.*

When the Asuras, at the churning of the ocean, gave the pitcher of *the water of immortality* in charge to Vishnu, he betrayed his trust by delivering it to their step-brothers and enemies, the celestial gods.—*Vide first book or Adi Parba of the Maha-Bharata.*

Instances like these might be multiplied beyond number: and crimes of a much deeper dye might easily be added to the list, were I not unwilling to stain these pages by making them the vehicle of such stories of immorality and vice. May God speedily purify the minds of my countrymen from the corruptness which such tales are too apt to produce, and lead their hearts to that pure morality which is inseparable from the true worship of Him!

AN APOLOGY

FOR THE

PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE,

INDEPENDENTLY OF

BRAHMUNICAL OBSERVANCES.

CALCUTTA:

1820

AN APOLOGY

FOR THE

PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE.

SUBRAHMANYA SASTRI, a diligent observer of Brahmanical tenets, wishing to prove that those Brahmans who do not study the Vedas with their subordinate sciences, are degraded from the rank of Brahmanism, prepared and offered an Essay on that subject to the Brahmans of the province of Bengal, who are generally deficient in those studies. In this, he has advanced three assertions: which, however, have no tendency to establish his position. He alleges 1st, that, "to a person not acquainted with the Vedas, neither temporary "heavenly enjoyments, nor eternal beatitude, can be allotted." 2ndly, that, "he only who has studied the Vedas is authorized to "seek the knowledge of God;" and 3rdly, that "men must perform "without omission all the rites and duties prescribed in the Vedas "and Smritis before acquiring a thorough knowledge of God." On these positions he attempts to establish, that the performance of the duties and rites prescribed by the Sastras for each class according to their religious order, such as the study of the Vedas and the offering of sacrifices, &c., is absolutely necessary towards the acquisition of a knowledge of God. We consequently take upon ourselves to offer in our own defence the following remarks, in answer to those assertions.

We admit that it is proper in men to observe the duties and rites prescribed by the Sastra for each class according to their religious order, in acquiring knowledge respecting God, such observance being conducive to that acquisition, an admission which is not inconsistent with the authorities of the Vedas and other Sastras. But we can by no means admit the necessity of observing those duties and rites as indispensable steps towards attaining divine knowledge, which the learned Sastri pronounces them to be; for the great Vyasa, in his work of the Vedanta Darsana, or the explanation of the spiritual parts of the Vedas, justifies the attainment of the knowledge of God, even by those who never practise the prescribed duties and rites, as appears from the following two passages of Vyasa in the same

Darsana. "Antarachapi tu taddrishteh,"—"Apicha smaryate." The celebrated Sankar-Acharya thus comments upon those two texts: "As to the question, Whether such men as have not the sacred "fire, or are afflicted with poverty, who profess no religious order "whatsoever, and who do not belong to any caste, are authorized to "seek divine knowledge or not? On a superficial view, it appears, "that they are not permitted to make such attainments, as the "duties prescribed for each class are declared to lead to divine "knowledge, and to those duties they are altogether strangers. "Such doubt having arisen, the great Vyasa thus decides: Even "a person who professes no religious order, is permitted to acquire "a knowledge of God, for it is found in the Vedas that Raikya, "Bachaknavi, and others, who, like them, did not belong to any class, "obtained divine knowledge. It is also mentioned in the sacred "tradition, that Samvarta and others, living naked and totally indepen- "dent of the world, who practised no prescribed duties, assumed the "rank of the highest devotees." Besides the texts of the Veda, such as "Tayorha Maitreyi Brahmabadini," &c., and "Atma va are", &c., show that Maitreyi and others, who, being women, had not the option of studying the Veda, were, notwithstanding, qualified to acquire divine knowledge; and in the Smriti as well as in the Commentary of the celebrated Sankar-Acharya Sulabha and other women are styled knowers of the Supreme Being. Also Bidur, Dharmabyadha, and others of the fourth class, attained the knowledge of God without having an opportunity of studying the Vedas. All this we find in the sacred traditions: hence those who have a thorough knowledge of the Vedas and Smritis, can pay no deference to the opinion maintained by the learned Sastri, that those only who have studied the Vedas are qualified to acquire the knowledge of God. Moreover, to remove all doubt as to Sudras and others being capable of attaining Divine knowledge without the assistance of the Vedas, the celebrated Commentator, in illustrating the text "Sravanadhyanaya," &c., asserts, that "the authority of the Smriti, stating that 'to all the four 'classes "preaching should be offered,' &c., shews that to the sacred traditions, "and to the Puranas, and also to the Agams, all the four classes "have equally access," thus establishing that the sacred traditions, Puranas, and Agams without distinction, can impart divine knowledge to mankind at large. From the decided opinion of Vyasa, and from the precedents given by the Vedas and sacred traditions, and also from

the conclusive verdict of the most revered Commentator, those who entertain respect for those authorities, will not admit the study of the Vedas and other duties required of each class to be the only means of acquiring knowledge of God. Hence the sacred tradition, stating that a person, by studying the Gita alone, had acquired final beatitude, stands unshaken; and also the positive declaration of the great Mahadeva with regard to the authentic and well-accepted Agam Sastras, as being the means of imparting divine knowledge to those who study them, will not be treated as inconsequential. If the spiritual part of the Vedas can enable men to acquire salvation by teaching them the true and eternal existence of God, and the false and perishable being of the universe, and inducing them to hear and constantly reflect on those doctrines, it is consistent with reason to admit, that the Smriti, and Agam, and other works, inculcating the same doctrines, afford means of attaining final beatitude. What should we say more?

THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDED ON

SACRED AUTHORITIES.

CALCUTTA:

1751 S.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDED ON SACRED AUTHORITIES.

The following Treatise, in the form of questions and answers, contains a brief account of the worship enjoined in the sacred writings, as due to that Being who is pure as well as eternal, and to whose existence Nature gives testimony; that the faithful may easily understand and become successful in the practice of this worship. The proof of each doctrine may be found, according to the figures, in the end of the work.

As this subject is almost always expounded, in the sacred writings, by means of questions and answers, that it may be more easily comprehended, a similar plan is adopted in this place also.

1 *Question.*—What is meant by worship?

Answer.—Worship implies the act of one with a view to please another; but when applied to the Supreme Being, it signifies a contemplation of his attributes.

2 *Q.*—To whom is worship due?

A.—To the AUTHOR and Governor of the universe, which is incomprehensibly formed, and filled with an endless variety of men and things; in which, as shown by the zodiac, in a manner far more wonderful than the machinery of a watch, the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars perform their rapid courses; and which is fraught with animate and inanimate matter of various kinds, locomotive and immoveable, of which there is not one particle but has its functions to perform.

3 *Q.*—What is he?

A.—We have already mentioned that he is to be worshipped, who is the Author and Governor of the universe; yet, neither the sacred writings nor logical argument, can define his nature.

4 *Q.*—Are there no means of defining him?

A.—It is repeatedly declared in the sacred writings, that he cannot be defined either by the intellect or by language. This appears from inference also; for, though the universe is visible, still no one

can ascertain its form or extent. How then can we define the Being whom we designate as its Author and Governor?

5 *Q.*—Is any one, on sufficient grounds, opposed to this worship?

A.—To this worship no one can be opposed on sufficient grounds; for, as we all worship the Supreme Being, adoring him as the Author and Governor of the universe, it is impossible for any one to object to such worship; because each person considers the object whom he worships as the Author and Governor of the universe; therefore, in accordance with his own faith, he must acknowledge that this worship is his own. In the same manner, they, who consider Time or Nature, or any other Object, as the Governor of the universe, even they cannot be opposed to this worship, as bearing in mind the Author and Governor of the universe. And in China, in Tartary, in Europe, and in all other countries, where so many sects exist, all believe the object whom they adore to be the Author and Governor of the universe; consequently, they also must acknowledge, according to their own faith, that this our worship is their own.

6 *Q.*—In some places in the sacred writings it is written that the Supreme Being is imperceptible and unexpressible; and in others, that he is capable of being known. How can this be reconciled?

A.—Where it is written that he is imperceptible and undefinable, it is meant, that his likeness cannot be conceived; and where it is said that he is capable of being known, his mere existence is referred to, that is, that there is a God, as the indescribable creation and government of this universe clearly demonstrate: in the same manner, as by the action of a body, we ascertain the existence of a spirit therein called the sentient soul, but the form or likeness of that spirit which pervades every limb and guides the body, we know not.

7 *Q.*—Are you hostile to any other worship?

A.—Certainly not; for, he who worships, be it whomsoever or whatsoever it may, considers that object as the Supreme Being, or as an object containing him: consequently, what cause have we to be hostile to him?

8 *Q.*—If you worship the Supreme Being, and other persons offer their adoration to the same Divine Being, but in a different form; what then is the difference between them and you?

A.—We differ in two ways; first, they worship under various forms and in particular places, believing the object of their worship to be the Supreme Being; but we declare that he, who is the Author

of the universe, is to be worshipped; besides this, we can determine no particular form or place. Secondly, we see that they who worship under any one particular form, are opposed to those who worship under another; but it is impossible for worshippers of any denomination to be opposed to us; as we have shown in the answer to the 5th question.

9 *Q.*—In what manner is this worship to be performed?

A.—By bearing in mind that the Author and Governor of this visible universe is the Supreme Being, and comparing this idea with the sacred writings and with reason. In this worship it is indispensably necessary to use exertions to subdue the senses, and to read such passages as direct attention to the Supreme Spirit. Exertion to subdue the senses, signifies an endeavour to direct the will and the senses, and the conduct in such a manner as not only to prevent our own or others' ill, but to secure our own and others' good; in fact, what is considered injurious to ourselves, should be avoided towards others. It is obvious that as we are so constituted, that without the help of sound we can conceive no idea; therefore, by means of the texts treating of the Supreme Being, we should contemplate him. The benefits which we continually receive from fire, from air, and from the sun, likewise from the various productions of the earth, such as the different kinds of grain, drugs, fruits and vegetables, all are dependent on him: and by considering and reasoning on the terms expressive of such ideas, the meaning itself is firmly fixed in the mind. It is repeatedly said in the sacred writings, that theological knowledge is dependent upon truth; consequently, the attainment of truth will enable us to worship the Supreme Being, who is Truth itself.

10 *Q.*—According to this worship, what rule must we establish with regard to the regulation of our food, conduct, and other worldly matters?

A.—It is proper to regulate our food and conduct agreeably to the sacred writings; therefore, he who follows no prescribed form among all those that are promulgated, but regulates his food and conduct according to his own will, is called self-willed; and to act according to our own wish, is opposed both by the Scriptures and by reason. In the Scriptures it is frequently forbidden. Let us examine it by reason. Suppose each person should, in non-conformity with prescribed form, regulate his conduct according to his own desires, a

speedy end must ensue to established societies; for to the self-willed, food, whether fit to be eaten or not, conduct proper or improper, desires lawful or unlawful, all are the same; he is guided by no rule: to him an action, performed according to the will, is faultless: but the will of all is not alike; consequently, in the fulfilment of our desires, where numerous opinions are mutually opposed, a quarrel is the most likely consequence; and the probable result of repeated quarrels is the destruction of human beings. In fact, however, it is highly improper to spend our whole time in judging of the propriety and impropriety of certain foods, without reflecting on science or Divine truth; for be food of whatever kind it may, in a very short space of time it undergoes a change into what is considered exceedingly impure, and this impure matter is, in various places, productive of different kinds of grain; therefore, it is cetainly far more preferable to adorn the mind than to think of purifying the belly.

11 *Q.*—In the performance of this worship, is any particular place, quarter, or time, necessary?

A.—A suitable place is certainly preferable, but it is not absolutely necessary; that is to say, in whatever place, towards whatever quarter, or at whatever time the mind is best at rest,—that place, that quarter, and that time is the most proper for the performance of this worship.

12 *Q.*—To whom is this worship fit to be taught?

A.—It may be taught to all, but effect being produced in each person according to his state of mental preparation, it will be proportionably successful.

SACRED AUTHORITIES.

सत् ॥ आदौ सच्छब्दप्रयोगो माङ्गलिकः तथाच भगवद्गीतायाम् । सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत् प्रयुज्यते । प्रशस्ते कर्म्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥*

1st उत्तरप्रमाणम् । आत्मेत्येवोपासीत । (वृहदारण्यकश्रुतिः ।) न स वेदेति विज्ञानं प्रस्तुत्य आत्मेत्येवोपासीतेत्यभिधानात् वेदोपासनशब्दयोरेकार्थताऽवगम्यते (भाष्यम् ।) आत्मानमेव लोकमुपासीत । (वृहदारण्यक श्रुतिः ।)

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* The Bengali version of this treatise was named Anushthan and on the top of the first page of the same was printed the word सत्, for which this explanation has been given and the authority cited.—Ed.

2nd उत्तरप्रमाणम् । जन्माद्यस्य यतः । (वेदान्तदर्शनस्य द्वितीयसूत्रम् ।) यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि जीवन्ति यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद्ब्रह्मेति । (तैत्तिरीय श्रुतिः ।) यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः । तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्मनामरूपमन्नञ्च जायते । (मुण्डकश्रुतिः ।) यत्तत् कारणमव्यक्तं नित्यं सदसदात्मकम् । तद्विसृष्टः स पुरुषो लोके ब्रह्मेति कीर्त्यते ॥ (मनुवचनम् ।) यतो विश्वं समुद्भूतं येन जातञ्च तिष्ठति । यस्मिन् सर्वाणि लीयन्ते तज्ज्ञेयं ब्रह्मलक्षणम् ॥ कालं कलयते काले मृत्योर्मृत्युर्भियो भयम् । वेदान्तवेद्यं चिद्रूपं यत्तच्छब्दोपलाक्षितम् ॥ (महानिर्वाणतन्त्रवचनम् ।) अस्यजगतो नामरूपाभ्यां व्याकृतस्यानेककर्तृभोक्तृसंयुक्तस्य प्रतिनियतदेशकालनिमित्तक्रियाफलाश्रयस्य मनसाप्यचिन्त्यरचनारूपस्य जन्मस्थितिभङ्गं यतः सर्वज्ञात् सर्वशक्तेः कारणाद्भवति तद्ब्रह्मेति वाक्यशेषः । (पूर्वोक्त वेदान्तसूत्रभाष्यम् ।)

3rd उत्तरप्रमाणम् । यतो वाचो निवर्त्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह । (तैत्तिरीय श्रुतिः ।) यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् । तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ (केनश्रुतिः ।)

4th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । अथात आदेशो नेति नेति । (वृहदारण्यकश्रुतिः ।) न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वागूगच्छति न मनो न विद्मो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् अन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि । (केन श्रुतिः ।) इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः । मनसस्तुपराबुद्धिर्बुद्धेर्यः परतस्तु सः (गीतास्मृतिः ।)

5th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । आत्मा ह्येषां स भवति । एवं वित् सर्वेषां भूतानामात्मा भवति । (वृहदारण्यकश्रुतिः ।) नामरूपादिनिर्देशैर्विभिन्नानामुपासकाः । परस्परं विरुन्धन्ति न तैरेतद्विरुध्यते ॥ (गौडपादाचार्यकारिका ।) विस्तारितमिदं प्रथमव्याख्याने ।

6th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तु शक्या न चक्षुषा । अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥ अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्यस्तत्वभावेन चोभयोः । अस्तित्वेनोपलब्धस्य तत्त्वभावः प्रसीदति ॥ (कठश्रुतिः ।) नामरूपादि-निर्देश-विशेषण-विवर्जितः । अपक्षयविनाशाभ्यां परिणामार्त्तिजन्मभिः । वर्जितः शक्यते वक्तुं यः सदास्तीति केवलम् ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ।) द्वादशव्याख्याने विस्तरेणाभिहितम् ।

7th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति । (कठश्रुतिः ।) ब्रह्मदृष्टिरुत्कर्षात् । (वेदान्तसूत्रम् ।) ब्रह्मदृष्टिरादित्यादिषु स्यात् कस्मात् उत्कर्षात् एवमुत्कर्षेणादित्यादयो दृष्टा भवन्ति उतकृष्टदृष्टिस्तेष्वध्यासात् । (तत् सूत्रभाष्यम् ।) येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः । तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ (गीतास्मृतिः ।)

8th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति स भूमा अथ यत्रान्यत् पश्यति अन्यच्छृणोति अन्यद्विजानाति तदल्पम् । (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् ।) पञ्चमोत्तरोक्तप्रमाणमपि द्रष्टव्यम् ।

9th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । अथ परमेश्वरचिन्तनप्रकारः । ऊर्धमूलोऽवाक्शाख एषोऽश्वत्थः सनातनः । तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते ॥ (कठोपनिषत् ।) तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च । सम्वत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्य्यः । तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वयांसि । प्राणापानौ ब्रीहियवौ तपश्च श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्य्यं विधिश्च । अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वे तस्मात् स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः । अतश्च सर्वा ओषधयो रसश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा ॥ (इति मुण्डकोपनिषत् ।) ज्ञानेनैवापरे विप्रा यजन्त्येतैर्मखैः सदा । ज्ञानमूलां क्रियामेषां पश्यन्तो ज्ञानचक्षुषा ॥ (चतुर्थाध्याये मनुवचनम् ।) भयादस्याग्निस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्य्यः । भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥ (इति मुण्डकोपनिषत् ।) एतदुपासनाया अन्तरङ्गसाधनप्रकारः । यथोक्तान्यपि कर्म्माणि परिहाय द्विजोत्तमः । आत्मज्ञाने शमे च स्याद्वेदाभ्यासे च यत्नवान् ॥ (द्वादशाध्याये मनुवचनम् ।) यथैवात्मा परस्तद्वद्द्रष्टव्यः शुभमिच्छता । सुखदुःखानि तुल्यानि यथात्मनि तथा परे ॥ इति स्मार्त्तधृत-दक्षवचनं सर्वव्यवहारनिदानम् । सत्यमायतनम् (केनश्रुतिः ।) द्वितीयचतुर्थषष्ठव्याख्यानेषु लिखितान्यपि द्रष्टव्यानि ।

10th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । शास्त्रमेव क्रियानियामकं यथा चातुर्वर्ण्यं त्रयो लोकाश्चत्वार आश्रमाः पृथक् । भूतं भव्यं भविष्यञ्च सर्वं वेदात् प्रसिध्यति ॥ (९७) सेनापत्यञ्च राज्यञ्च दण्डनेतृत्वमेव च । सर्वलोकाधिपत्यञ्च वेदशास्त्रविदर्हति ॥ (१००) (मनुस्मृतौ द्वादशाध्याये) ।

दशमोत्तरोक्त-स्वेच्छाचार-निन्दाश्रवणम् ।

क्रियाहीनस्य मूर्खस्य महारोगिण एव च । यथेष्टाचरणस्याहुर्मरणान्तमशौचकम् ॥

उदरपवित्रतापेक्षया मनः शुद्धौ यत्न आवश्यकः । तथाहि तन्त्रे । मले परिक्षते शस्यं शस्ये परिक्षते मलम् । द्रव्यशुद्धिः कथं देवि मनःशुद्धिं समाचरेत् ॥

11th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । शुचिदेशादेः प्राशस्त्ये । कुटुम्बे शुचौदेशे स्वाध्यायमधीयानो धार्म्मिकान् विदधदित्यादि (छान्दोग्यश्रुतिः ।) ·

शुचिदेशादीनामत्यन्तनियमस्याभावः । यथा ।

यत्रैकाग्रता तत्राविशेषात् (वेदान्तदर्शनसूत्रम्) ४ । १ । ११ । यत्रैवास्य दिने काले वा मनसः सौकर्य्येणैकाग्रता भवति तत्रैवोपासीत प्राची दिक् पूर्वाह्न प्राचीप्रवणादिवत् विशेषाश्रवणात् (भाष्यम् ।)

12th उत्तरप्रमाणम् । प्रजापतेः सकाशादिन्द्रविरोचनाभ्यां प्राप्तेऽपि तुल्योपदेशे असुरस्वभावाद्विरोचनस्तदुपदेशफलं न लेभे । तथाहि स हि शान्तहृदय एव विरोचनोऽसुरान् जगाम तेभ्योहैतामुपनिषदं प्रोवाच आत्मैवेहमय्य आत्मा परिचर्य्य आत्मानमेवेहमहयन् आत्मानं परिचरयन् उभौ लोकाववाप्नोति इमञ्चामुञ्चेति । (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् ।)

इन्द्रस्तु क्रमसाधनेन कृतार्थोऽभवत् यथा ।

अश्व इव रोमाणि विधूय पापं चन्द्र इव राहोर्मुखात् प्रमुच्य धूत्वा शरीरं सकृतं कृतात्मा इत्यादि (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् ।)

अनुष्ठानं सम्पूर्णम् । शकाब्दाः १७५१

THE
BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE
OR
THE MISSIONARY AND THE BRAHMUN
BEING
A VINDICATION OF THE HINDOO RELIGION AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

CALCUTTA.
1821.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

For a period of upwards of fifty years, this country (Bengal) has been in exclusive possession of the English nation; during the first thirty years of which, from their word and deed, it was universally believed that they would not interfere with the religion of their subjects, and that they truly wished every man to act in such matters according to the dictates of his own conscience. Their possessions in Hindoostan and their political strength have, through the grace of God, gradually increased. But during the last twenty years, a body of English gentlemen, who are called missionaries, have been publicly endeavouring, in several ways to convert Hindoos and Mussulmans of this country into Christianity. The first way is that of publishing and distributing among the natives various books, large and small, reviling both religions, and abusing and ridiculing the gods and saints of the former: the second way is that of standing in front of the doors of the natives or in the public roads to preach the excellency of their own religion and the debasedness of that of others: the third way is that if any natives of low origin become Christians from the desire of gain or from any other motives, these gentlemen employ and maintain them as a necessary encouragement to others to follow their example.

It is true that the apostles of Jesus Christ used to preach the superiority of the Christian religion to the natives of different countries. But we must recollect that they were not of the rulers of those countries where they preached. Were the missionaries likewise to preach the Gospel and distribute books in countries not conquered by the English, such as Turkey, Persia, &c., which are much nearer England, they would be esteemed a body of men truly zealous in propagating religion and in following the example of the founders of Christianity. In Bengal, where the English are the sole rulers, and where the mere name of Englishman is sufficient to frighten people, an encroachment upon the rights of her poor timid and humble inhabitants and upon their religion, cannot be viewed in the eyes of God or the public as a justifiable act. For wise and good men always

feel disinclined to hurt those that are of much less strength than themselves, and if such weak creatures be dependent on them and subject to their authority, they can never attempt, even in thought, to mortify their feelings.

We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries, and the cause of such degradation has been our excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals; as well as our division into castes, which has been the source of want of unity among us.

It seems almost natural that when one nation succeeds in conquering another, the former, though their religion may be quite ridiculous, laugh at and despise the religion and manners of those that are fallen into their power. For example, Mussalmans, upon their conquest of India, proved highly inimical to the religious exercises of Hindoos. When the generals of Chungezkhan, who denied God and were like wild beasts in their manners, invaded the western part of Hindoostan, they universally mocked at the profession of God and of futurity expressed to them by the natives of India. The savages of Arracan, on their invasion of the eastern part of Bengal, always attempted to degrade the religion of Hindoos. In ancient days, the Greeks and the Romans, who were gross idolaters and immoral in their lives, used to laugh at the religion and conduct of their Jewish subjects, a sect who were devoted to the belief of one God. It is therefore not uncommon if the English missionaries, who are of the conquerors of this country, revile and mock at the religion of its natives. But as the English are celebrated for the manifestation of humanity and for administering justice, and as a great many gentlemen among them are noticed to have had an aversion to violate equity, it would tend to destroy their acknowledged character if they follow the example of the former savage conquerors in disturbing the established religion of the country; because to introduce a religion by means of abuse and insult, or by affording the hope of worldly gain, is inconsistent with reason and justice. If by the force of argument they can prove the truth of their own religion and the falsity of that of Hindoos, many would of course embrace their doctrines, and in case they fail to prove this, they should not undergo such useless trouble, nor tease Hindoos any longer by their attempts at conversion. In consideration of the small huts in which Brahmans of learning generally reside, and the simple food, such as vegetables, &c., which they are

accustomed to eat, and the poverty which obliges them to live upon charity, the missionary gentlemen may not, I hope, abstain from controversy from contempt of them, for truth and true religion do not always belong to wealth and power, high names or lofty palaces.

Now, in the Mission-press of Shreerampore a letter shewing the unreasonableness of all the Hindoo Sastras having appeared, I have inserted in the 1st and 2nd numbers of this magazine all the questions in the above letter as well as their answers, and afterwards the replies that may be made by both parties shall in like manner be published.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In giving the contents of the following pages to the world in a new edition, I think it necessary to prefix a short explanation of the origin of the controversy, and the manner in which it concluded. The BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE was commenced for the purpose of answering the objections against the Hindoo Religion contained in a Bengalee Weekly Newspaper, entitled "SAMACHAR DARPAN," conducted by some of the most eminent of the Christian Missionaries, and published at Shreerampore. In that paper of the 14th July, 1821, a letter was inserted containing certain doubts regarding the Sastras, to which the writer invited any one to favour him with an answer, through the same channel. I accordingly sent a reply in the Bengalee language, to which, however, the conductors of the work calling for it, refused insertion; and I therefore formed the resolution of publishing the whole controversy with an English translation in a work of my own "the BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE," now re-printed, which contains all that was written on both sides.

In the first number of the MAGAZINE I replied to the arguments they adduced against the Sastras, or immediate explanations of the Vedas. our original Sacred Books; and in the second I answered the objections urged against the Puranas and Tantras, or Historical Illustrations of the Hindoo Mythology, shewing that the doctrines of the former are much more rational than the religion which the Missionaries profess, and that those of the latter. if unreasonable, are not more so than their Christian Faith. To this the Missionaries

made a reply in their work entitled the "FRIEND OF INDIA," No. 38, which was immediately answered by me in the 3rd No. of the MAGAZINE; and from the continuation of a regular controversy of this kind, I expected that in a very short time, the truth or fallacy of one or other of our religious systems would be clearly established; but to my great surprise and disappointment, the Christian Missionaries, after having provoked the discussion, suddenly abandoned it; and the 3rd No. of my MAGAZINE has remained unanswered for nearly two years. During that long period the Hindoo community (to whom the work was particularly addressed and therefore printed both in Bengalee and English) have made up their minds that the arguments of the BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE are unanswerable; and I now republish, therefore, only the English translation, that the learned among Christians, in Europe as well as in Asia, may form their opinion on the subject.

It is well-known to the whole world, that no people on earth are more tolerant than the Hindoos, who believe all men to be equally within the reach of Divine beneficence, which embraces the good of every religious sect and denomination: therefore it cannot be imagined that my object in publishing this Magazine was to oppose Christianity; but I was influenced by the conviction that persons who travel to a distant country for the purpose of overturning the opinions of its inhabitants and introducing their own, ought to be prepared to demonstrate that the latter are more reasonable than the former.

In conclusion, I beg to ask every candid and reflecting reader:—Whether a man be placed on an imperial throne, or sit in the dust—whether he be lord of the whole known world, or destitute of even a hut—the commander of millions, or without a single follower—whether he be intimately acquainted with all human learning, or ignorant of letters—whether he be ruddy and handsome, or dark and deformed—yet if while he declares that God is not man, he again professes to believe in a God-Man or Man-God, under whatever sophistry the idea may be sheltered,—can such a person have a just claim to enjoy respect in the intellectual world? And does he not expose himself to censure, should he, at the same time, ascribe unreasonableness to others?

THE LETTER ALLUDED TO

PUBLISHED IN THE

Samachar Darpan of the 14th July, 1821.

I beg to inform the learned Public of all countries that at present Calcutta is a seat of learning and of learned men, and perhaps there is no other place where doubts arising from the interpretation of the Sastras can be removed so well as in this metropolis. I therefore state a few questions methodically. It will gratify me, and do essential good to mankind, if any one favor me with replies thereto through the "SAMACHAR DARPAN"; for in answering them there will not be much labour and no expense whatever.

In the first place it appears from the perusal of the Vedanta Sastra, that God is one, eternal, unlimited by past, present, or future time, without form, beyond the apprehension of the senses, void of desires, pure intellect, without defect and perfect in every respect; and the soul is not different from him nor is there any other real existence besides him.

The visible world is, as it says, created by Maya alone; and that Maya is opposed to a true knowledge of God [*i.e.*, after the acquisition of a knowledge of God, the effect of Maya, which is the universe, no longer continues to appear a real existence, in the same manner as when a piece of rope is mistaken for a snake, the misconceived existence of the snake is destroyed by a knowledge of the real existence of the rope, or as the palace of Gandharvas (a genus supposed to be inferior only to the celestial gods) seen in a dream ceases to appear immediately after the expiration of the dream]. The world and consciousness are both declared false; they appear as if they had real existence owing to ignorance of the nature of God. An admission of the truth of these doctrines either brings reproach upon God, or establishes the supremacy and eternity in some degree both of God and of Maya.

2ndly. If the soul be the same as God, nothing can justify the belief that the soul is liable to be rewarded and punished according to its good or evil works.

3rdly. From these doctrines the perfection of God and his sufficiency cannot be maintained.

This Sastra teaches also that as bubbles arise from and again are absorbed in water, in like manner through the influence of Maya the world repeatedly proceeds from, depends upon, and is absorbed into God. How can God be blameless if he is represented as a Being influenced by Maya in the creation of the world? The Veda declares, "The birth, continuation, and destruction of the world are effected by the Supreme Being." According to this, how can we admit the enjoyment of heaven and endurance of hell by the soul?

In the second place, the Nyaya Sastra says, that God is one and souls are various; they both are imperishable; and that space, position, and time as well as atoms are eternal; and it admits that the act of creating the world attaches to God in a peculiarly united relation called Samavaya, whereby the Deity is called the Creator of the world; and it says also that according to the good or evil works of the soul he rewards or punishes it, and that his will is immutable. These doctrines in fact deny to God the agency of the world; for according to them he appears, like us, to have created the world with the aid of materials; but in reality he is above the need of assistance. After admitting the immutability of the will of God, how can we be persuaded to believe that he creates, preserves and again destroys all things at different times and bestows on the soul the consequences of its works at successive times? From these doctrines why should we not consider God and the soul as gods, one of great authority and the other of less power, like two men, one possessed of greater energy than the other? These destroy totally the doctrine of the unity of God.

In the third place the Mimansa Sastra says that the wonderful consequences of the various sacrificial rites consisting of incantations composed of the Sanskrit language and of different offerings, are God. In this world among mankind there are various languages and many Sastras; and sacrificial articles and language both are insensible and in the power of men: they are, however, the cause of rites. How can we call God the consequences of the rites which are produced by men? Moreover, God is said by this Sastra to be mere rites, and at the same time one; but we see that rites are various: how can then God be proved one according to these doctrines? In a country where rites are performed through a language different from Sanskrit, why

should not that country be supposed without God? The Patanjala Sastra represents yoga of six kinds in lieu of rites: therefore, it is, according to the above-stated arguments, included in the Mimansa Sastra.

In the fourth instance, the Sankhya Sastra says that nature and the God of nature are operating jointly, like the two halves of a grain of vetch; and on account of the supremacy of the latter he is called the invisible God. How, according to these doctrines, can God be considered one? Why do we not believe the duality of God?

The remaining part of the letter is to be inserted in the 2nd number of this magazine.

Reply to the above letter, to which reply the Editor of the Samachar Darpan denied insertion.

I observed in the 'Samachar Darpan' of the 14th July, 1821, sent me by a respectable native, an attempt of some intelligent though misinformed person to shew the unreasonableness of all the Hindoo Sastras and thereby to disprove their authority. The missionary gentlemen had before been in the habit of making these attempts only in discourses with the natives or through publications written expressly with that view. But now they have begun the same attacks through the medium of a newspaper. I have not, however, felt much inclined to blame this conduct, because the Editor has requested an answer to the writer, to whom I therefore reply as follows.

You, in the first place, attempt to shew the folly of the Vedanta, and for that purpose recount its doctrines, saying "that it teaches God to be one, eternal, unlimited by past, present or future time, without form or desires, beyond the apprehension of the senses, pure intellect, omnipresent, without defect and perfect in every respect; and that there is no other real existence except him, nor is the soul different from him; that this visible world is created by his power, *i.e.*, Maya, and that Maya is opposed to a true knowledge of God, (*i.e.*, after the acquisition of a knowledge of God the effect of Maya, which is the universe, no longer continues to appear as a real existence, in the same manner as when a piece of rope is mistaken for a snake the misconceived existence of the snake is destroyed by a knowledge of the real existence of the rope, or as the palace of Gandharvas seen in a dream ceases to appear immediately after the expiration of the dream.)"

Now, you allege these faults in these doctrines. 1st. An admission of their truth either brings reprcach upon God or establishes the supremacy and eternity both of God and of Maya. As you have not stated what reproach attaches to God from the admission of these doctrines, I am unable to answer the first alternative. If you kindly particularize it, I may endeavour to make a reply. As to the latter alternative respecting the supremacy and eternity of Maya, I beg to answer, that the followers of the Vedanta (in common with Christians and Musalmans who believe God to be eternal) profess also the eternity of all his attributes. Maya is the creating power of the eternal God, and consequently it is declared by the Vedanta to be eternal. "Maya "has no separate existence; it is the power of God and is known by "its effects as heat is the power of fire and has no separate existence, "yet is known from its effects" (quoted in the Vedanta.) Should it be improper to declare the attributes of God eternal, then such impropriety applies universally to all religious systems, and the Vedanta cannot be alone accused of this impropriety.

In like manner, in the Vedanta and in other systems, as well as in common experience, the superiority of substance over its qualities is acknowledged. The Vedanta has never stated, in any instance, the supremacy both of God and of Maya, that you should charge the Vedanta with absurdity.

The second fault which you find, is that if the soul be tne same as God, nothing can justify the belief that the soul is liable to be rewarded and punished according to its good and evil works; for such a belief would amount to the blasphemy that God also is liable to reward and punishment.

I reply—The world, as the Vedanta says, is the effect of Maya, and is material; but God is mere spirit, whose particular influences being shed upon certain material objects are called souls in the same manner as the reflections of the sun are seen on water placed in various vessels. As these reflections of the sun seem to be moved by the motion of the water of those vessels without effecting any motion in the sun, so souls, being, as it were, the reflections of the Supreme Spirit on matter, seem to be affected by the circumstances that influence matter, without God being affected by such circumstances. As some reflections are bright from the purity of the water on which they are cast, while others seem obscure owing to its foulness, so some souls are more pure from the purity of the matter

with which they are connected, while others are dull owing to the dullness of matter.

As the reflections of the sun, though without light proper to themselves, appear splendid from their connection with the illuminating sun, so the soul, though not true intellect, seems intellectual and acts as if it were real spirit from its actual relation to the Universal Intellect: and as from the particular relations of the sun to the water placed in different pots, various reflections appear resembling the same sun in nature and differing from it in qualities; and again as these cease to appear on the removal of the water, so through the peculiar relation of various material objects to one Supreme Spirit, numerous souls appear and seem as performing good and evil works, and also receiving their consequences; and as soon as that relation ceases, they, at that very minute cease to appear distinctly from their original. Hence God is one, and the soul, although it is not in fact of a different origin from God, is yet liable to experience the consequences of good and evil works; but this liability of the soul to reward or punishment cannot render God liable to either.

The third fault alleged by you, is, that from the doctrines alluded to, the perfection of God and his sufficiency cannot be maintained. This is your position, but you have advanced no arguments to prove it. If you afterwards do, I may consider the force of them. If you, however, mean by the position that if souls be considered as parts of God, as declared by the Vedanta, and proceeding from the Supreme Spirit, God must be insufficient and imperfect; I will in this case refer you to the above answer, that is, although the reflections of the sun owe to him their existence and depend upon and return to the same sun, yet this circumstance does not tend to prove the insufficiency or imperfection of the sun.

Moreover, you say the Vedanta teaches that as bubbles arise from and again are absorbed in water; in like manner through the influence of Maya the world repeatedly proceeds from, depends upon, and is absorbed into God; and hence you infer that, according to this doctrine, the reproach of God's being under the influence of Maya attaches to the Deity. I reply, that the resemblance of the bubbles with the world is maintained by the Vedanta only in two respects: 1st, as the bubbles receive from water through the influence of the wind, their birth and existence, so the world takes by the

power of God, its original existence from the Supreme Being and depends upon him ; and 2ndly, that there is no reality in the existence either of bubbles or of the world. When we say such a one is like a lion, we mean resemblance only in respect of courage and strength and not in every respect, as in point of shape, size, &c. In like manner the resemblance of the world to bubbles, in this instance, lies in point of dependence and unreality. Were the similarity acknowledged in every respect we must admit God to be an insensitive existence like a portion of water and the world as a bubble to be a small part of God moving sometimes on the surface of the Deity and again uniting with him. Those who look only after faults, may think themselves justified in alleging that in consequence of the comparison of the world to bubbles of water and of Maya to the wind, as found in the Vedanta, God is supposed to be influenced by Maya.

Maya is the power of God through which the world receives its birth, existence and changes; but no men of learning who are not biassed by partiality, would infer from these opinions an idea of the inferiority of God to Maya, his attribute, For as men of every tribe and of every country whatsoever acknowledge God to be the Cause of the world, they necessarily consider him possessed of the power through which he creates the world. But no one is from this concluded to believe that God is subordinate to that power. God pardons the sins of those that sincerely repent, through his attribute of mercy: this cannot be taken as an admission of the Deity's subjection to his own mercy. The followers of the Vedanta say, that Maya is opposed to knowledge, for when a true knowledge of God is obtained, the effect of Maya, which makes the soul appear distinct from God, does immediately cease

The term Maya implies, primarily, the power of creation, and secondarily, its effect, which is the Universe. The Vedanta, by comparing the world with the misconceived notion of a snake, when a rope really exists, means that the world, like the supposed snake, has no independent existence, that it receives its existence from the Supreme Being. In like manner the Vedanta compares the world with a dream : as all the objects seen in a dream depend upon the motion of the mind, so the existence of the world is dependent upon the being of God, who is the only object of supreme love ; and in declaring that Cod is all in all and that there is no other substance

except God, the Vedanta means that existence in reality belongs to God alone. He is consequently true and omnipresent; nothing else can bear the name of true existence. We find the phrases, God is all and in all, in the Christian books; and I suppose they do not mean by such words that pots, mats, &c., are gods. I am inclined to believe that by these terms they mean the omnipresence of God. Why do you attempt, by cavils, to find fault with the Vedanta?

All the objects are divided into matter and spirit. The world, as Vedanta says, is but matter, the effect of Maya, and God is spirit. Hence as every material object takes its origin from the universal matter under the superintendence of the Supreme Spirit, and again returns to its origin; so all individual perceiving existences, called souls, like reflections of the sun, appear differently from each other depending upon the universal perception and again returning to it. We see the flame of one candle appearing differently from that of another, but as soon as its connexion with the candle is over, each is absorbed into the universal heat. In like manner, the individual spirits return to the universal Supreme Spirit, as soon as its connexion with matter is destroyed.

Whether is it more reasonable to say that the intellectual soul has its origin from the universal pure Spirit, or that the soul is made of nothing or of insensible matter? If you say God is omnipotent, he can therefore produce the soul from nothing, you would be involved in difficulties; one of which is that as God is not a perceptible object, we can establish his existence only from reason and experience: were we to set aside reason and experience in order to admit that the soul or any other object is made from nothing, there would remain no means to prove the existence of God, much less of his omnipotence. It would strengthen atheistical tenets and destroy all religion, to defy inference from experience.

You find fault with the Nyaya Sastra, that it declares that God is one, and souls are various, but both imperishable; that space, position and time, as well as atoms are eternal; and that the power of creation resides in God in a peculiarly united relation. It says also that God allots to the soul the consequences of its good and evil works; and that he is possessed of immutable will. Hence you maintain that according to these doctrines, God cannot be supposed to be the true cause of the world; because he, like us, creates things with the aid of materials, such as matter, &c. I reply—Every professor of any

theistical system, such as the followers of the Nyaya doctrines, and those of Christianity believe that God is not perishable, and that the soul has no end. The soul, during an endless period, either enjoys the beatitude procured by the acquisition of a knowledge of God, or receives the consequences of works. In like manner, they both believe that it is God that bestows on the soul the consequences of its good and evil actions; and that the will of God is immutable. If any fault be found with these doctrines, then the system of the Nyaya and of Christianity both must be equally subject to it; for both systems maintain these doctrines.

Besides, different objects, as the Nyaya says, are of course produced at different times, a circumstance which cannot disprove the eternity of the will of God, who is beyond the limits of time; but all other objects are effected at certain times as appointed by the eternal will of God.

The relation which subsists between a substance and its quality or action, is called "Samavaya" and by that relation the act of creating the world resides in the Creator, a fact which is acknowledged by almost all theists. No being can be called an agent, unless an action be found in him.

No one can ever conceive any object, whether God or not-God, divested of space and time. If you therefore set aside the idea of space and time, you will not be able to prove anything whatever. Both the followers of the Nyaya and of the Christian religion believe God to be eternal, that is, he exists from eternity to eternity; and the very term eternity, implying duration without beginning or end, makes it coeval with God. But if we mean by the eternal existence of God, that he had no beginning in point of time nor will he have an end—this definition is not only applicable to God and to time, but also points out even that the notion of the eternity of God depends on the notion of time.

It is obvious that the material cause of the world is its most minute particles, whose destruction is evidently impossible: these are called *anus* or atoms. The immaterial God cannot be supposed the material cause of those particles, nor can Nothing be supposed to be the cause of them: therefore these particles must be eternal, and are only brought into different forms, at different times and places, by the will of God. We see all that originate in volition or voluntary causes, producing effects by means of materials; and as God is acknow-

ledged by all parties to be the voluntary cause of the world, he therefore is believed to have created the world by means of matter, space, and time. The objection which you make to this system, is, that according to this doctrine the Creator of the world and the individual soul, which is also a partial creator, should be considered gods ; the only difference would be that the former is greater than the latter. I reply—Such objection is not applicable to this system ; because God is an independent agent, and the Creater of the whole world ; but the soul is an inferior Agent dependent in all its acts on the will of God. No partial resemblance can establish the equality of any being with God ; for Christians and Hindoos ascribe to God and to the soul, will and mercy ; but neither of them suppose that therefore both are Gods, but that one is superior and the other inferior.

You object to the Mimansa, saying that it declares God to be the wonderful consequences occasioned by the performance of various sacrificial rites consisting of various articles, and of incantations composed of Sanskrit words ; but that among mankind there are various languages and sastras, and both language and sacrificial articles are but insensible and under the power of man. How can God be the consequences of rites, the product of language and sacrificial articles, both of which are in the power of human beings ? And you again say, that according to the Mimansa doctrines, God is one and that he is mere rites ; but rites are various. How can the unity of God, according to these sentiments, be maintained ? Especially in those countries where rites are not performed in the Sanskrit language, God cannot exist. I reply, in the first place, the two objections offered by you are inconsistent with each other ; for first you say that God is said by the Mimansa to be the consequences of rites, and again you say that he is declared to be rites themselves. However, the followers of the Mimansa are of two classes : one do not carry their view further than the performance of rites, and they are reckoned among atheists ; another sect profess the existence of God, but they say that the reward or punishment which we experience is the consequence of our works, to which God is quite neutral ; and they maintain that to say that God, by inducing some men to pray to him or to act virtuously, rewards them, and at the same time neglects others and then punishes them for not having made their supplications to him (though both are equally his children), amounts to an imputation against God of unjust partiality. Hence it is evident,

that according to the doctrines of this sect, the unity of God is well maintained.

In attempting to expose the Patanjala Darsana you say that it recommends to man, in lieu of rites, to perform yoga (or the regulating of breath in a particular mode which is calculated to divert the human mind from all worldly objects :) therefore the objections applicable to the Mimansa are applicable to the Patanjala also.

I reply—It is declared in the Patanjala that through means of yoga man may surmount all the distress and grievances of the world whereby he may enjoy beatitude, and that God is pure and beyond the apprehension of the senses and is the Superintendent of the universe. I am therefore at a loss to know upon what ground you have placed the Patanjala on a level with the Mimansa.

You find fault with the doctrines of the Sankhya that it represents the Ruler of nature and nature as the two halves of a grain of vetch, but on account of the supremacy of the former, he is called the invisible God. Hence you infer the duality of the Deity. I reply that the invisible but pervading nature is said by the Sankhya to be, under the influence of the Supreme Spirit, the cause of the existence and continuation of the universe. Nature is therefore declared by the Sankhya to be subordinate to, and dependent on the perceiving Spirit, and consequently the Spirit is the Supreme God.

The commentators, in their interpretation of the Veda, though they differ from each other on subordinate subjects, yet all agree in ascribing to him neither *form* nor *flesh*, neithor *birth* nor *death*.

The remaining part of the answer is to be inserted in the 2nd number of the Magazine.

NUMBER SECOND

OF THE

BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE.

Translation of an extract from a letter (shewing the unreasonableness of the Hindoo Sastras,) which appeared in the Samachar Darpan, a weekly newspaper printed at the Mission Press, Shreerampore, of date July 14, 1821.

FIFTHLY. In the Puranas and Tantras the worship of God as possessing various names, forms and localities is ordered for the benefit of mankind and the choosing of a spiritual teacher and submitting implicitly to his instructions, are also strictly enjoined; and they also enjoin the belief that such visible gods—although having, like us, women and children, although subject to the senses and discharging all bodily functions—are omnipresent. This is very wonderful. In the first place, from this it follows that there are many gods, and they are subject to the senses. Secondly, the omnipresence of a being possessed of name and form is incredible. If you say his organs are not like ours, we acknowledge it. But if he is not possessed of organs composed of the material elements like us, then we must consider him as possessed of organs composed of immaterial elements; but material existences can never know immaterial objects, why then should I acknowledge him to be possessed of names and forms? Thirdly, that the Sastra says that God is possessed of name and form, but that mankind cannot see him with their natural eyes. On this ground, how can I acknowledge his forms and names? Fourthly, in that Sastra there is an account of the regard due to the words of a spiritual teacher. If any one is unacquainted with a particular subject how can his instructions on that subject be of any advantage? There would be some more reason, if any one desirous of knowing the way of God from another should first ascertain his qualifications and then put confidence in him. Any mode of receiving religious instruction besides this, although it may be agreeable to the popular practice, will be productive of no advantage.

SIXTHLY. According to the doctrine of the Hindoo Sastras, mankind are repeatedly born and repeatedly die, assuming through the influence of their works animate or inanimate bodies. According to one sect there is the eternal enjoyment of heaven or endurance of hell after death, and according to another sect there is no future state; and all the inhabitants of this world, except the inhabitants of Hindoostan, receive no consequence of their works and are not subject to works. Which of these is true? and in what way is it possible that they can all alike be consistent with the sastras?

A learned person has sent from a distant place a letter containing these few questions. His wish is to obtain an answer to each question and it has accordingly been printed: Whoever writes a proper answer may have it printed and everywhere distributed by sending it to the Shreerampore printing office.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

Translation of an extract from a reply in defence of the Hindoo Sastras which was sent to the Editor of the Samachar Darpan, but was not inserted in that paper.

FIFTHLY. You find fault with the Puranas and Tantras that they have established the duty of worshipping God, for the benefit of mankind, as possessing various forms, names and localities; because they order to have a spiritual teacher, and to repose implicit confidence in his words: because they acknowledge the omnipresence of a Being whom yet they allow to be possessed of form, wife, and children, subject to the senses, and discharging all bodily functions; and because according to this, in the first place, it appears that there are many gods and that they enjoy the things of this world: that secondly, the omnipresence of a being possessed of name and form is incredible: and that thirdly, those Sastras affirm that God is possessed of name and form; but mortals cannot perceive him by their bodily eyes—how on this ground can we acknowledge his name and form?

I answer. The Puranas, &c., agreeable to the Vedanta represent God in every way as incomprehensible and without form. There is, moreover, this in the Puranas, that lest persons of feeble intellect unable to comprehend God as not subject to the senses and without form, should either pass their life without any religious duties whatsoever or should engage in evil work—to prevent this they have represented God in the form of a man and other animals and as possessed of all those desires with which we are conversant whereby they may have some regard to the Divine Being. Afterwards by diligent endeavours they become qualified for the true knowledge of God: but over and over again the Puranas have carefully affirmed, that they have given this account of the forms of God with a view to the benefit of persons of weak minds, and that in truth, God is without name, form, organs, and sensual enjoyment. "Weak and ignorant "persons, unable to know the supreme and indivisible God, think "of him as possessed of certain limitations." (Sentence quoted in the commentary upon the Mandukya Upanishad.) "For the assistance of

"the worshippers of the Supreme Being, who is pure intellect, one, "without divisibility or body, a fictitious representation is given of "his form" (a sentence of Jamadagni quoted by the Smartta). "According to the nature of his qualities, his various forms have been "fictitiously given for the benefit of those worshippers who are of "slow understanding." (Mahanirvana Tantra.)

But it is particularly to be noticed, that there is no end of the Tantras. In the same manner the Mahapuranas, Puranas, Upapuranas, Ramayana, &c., are very numerous: on this account an excellent rule from the first has been this, that those Puranas and Tantras which have commentaries, and those parts which have been quoted by the acknowledged expounders, are received for evidence; otherwise a sentence quoted on the mere authority of the Puranas and Tantras is not considered evidence. Those numerous Puranas and Tantras which have no commentary and are not quoted by any established expounder may probably be of recent composition. Some Puranas and Tantras are received in one province, the natives of other provinces consider them spurious; or rather, what some people in a province acknowledge, others considering it to be only recent, do not receive; therefore those Puranas and Tantras only which have been commented upon or quoted by respectable authors are to be regarded. A commonly received rule for ascertaining the authority of any book is this, that whatever book opposes the Veda, is destitute of authority. "All Smritis which are contrary to the Veda, and all atheistical "works, are not conducive to future happiness: they dwell in "darkness." MANU. But the missionary gentlemen seldom translate into English the Upanishads, the ancient Smritis, the Tantras quoted by respectable authors and which have been always regarded. But having translated those works which are opposed to the Vedas, which are not quoted by any respectable author, and which have never been regarded as authority, they always represent the Hindoo Religion as very base.

With a view to prove the errors of the Puranas and Tantras, you say, that the Puranas represent God as possessed of various names and forms, as possessed of a wife and children, and as subject to the senses, and to the discharge of bodily functions; from which it follows that there are many gods, that they are subject to sensual pleasure, and the omnipresence of God cannot be maintained. I therefore humbly ask the missionary gentlemen, whether or not they call Jesus

Christ, who is possesseu of the human form and also the Holy Ghost who is possessed of the dove shape, the very God ? (1) And whether they do not consider that Jesus Christ, the very God, received impressions by the external organs, eyes, &c. and operated by means of the active organs, hands, &c. And whether or not they consider him as subject to all the human passions ? Was he angry or not? (2) Was his mind afflicted or not ? (3) Did he experience any suffering or pain ? (4) And did he not eat and drink ? (5) Did he not live a long time with his own mother, brothers and relations? (6) Was he not born ? (7) And did he not die ? (8) And did not the Holy Ghost, who is the very God, in the form of a dove remove from one place to another ? (9) And did he not beget Jesus Christ by his intercourse with a woman ? (10) If they acknowledge all this, then they cannot find fault with the Puranas, alleging that in them the names and the forms of God are established, and that according to them God must be considered as subject to the senses, and as possessing senses and organs, and that God must be considered as having a wife and child, and as not possessed of omnipresence on account of his having a form. Because all these errors, *viz.*, the plurality of gods, their sensual indulgence and their locality are applicable to themselves in a complete degree. To say that everything however contrary to the laws of nature, is possible with God, will equally afford a pretence to missionaries and Hindoos in support of their respective incarnations. The aged Vyasa has spoken truth in the Mahabharata : " O king !

(1) " And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him ;" Luke, Chap. III., v. 22.

(2) " And, when he had looked round about on them *with anger*," Mark, Chap. III., v. 5.

(3) " And being in an *agony*, he prayed more earnestly : and *his sweat* was as it were great *drops of blood* falling down to the ground." Luke, Chap. XXII., v. 44.

(4) "Jesus *cried* with a loud voice, saying, My God, My God, why hast thou *forsaken me*." Matthew, Chap. XXVII., v. 46.

(5) " The Son of man is come *eating and drinking* ;" Luke, Chap. VII., v. 34.

(6) " And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and *was subject unto them* :" Luke, Chap. II., v. 51.

(7) " When Jesus *was born* in Bethlehem, &c." Matthew, Chap. II., v. 1.

(8) " And they shall scourge him and put him *to death*." Luke, Chap. XVIII., v. 33.

(9) Luke, Chap. III., v. 22.

(10) "The Holy-Ghost *shall come* upon thee, &c." Luke, Chap. I., v. 35. " Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise : When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she *was found with child of the Holy Ghost*." Matthew, 18.

a person sees the faults of another although they are like the grains of mustard seed, but although his own faults are big as the Bel fruit, looking at them he cannot perceive them." Moreover the Puranas say that the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God which we have mentioned, are fictitious; and we have so spoken with a view to engage the minds of persons of weak understanding; but the missionary gentlemen say that the account which is given in the Bible of the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God is real. Therefore the plurality of gods, their locality and subjection to sensual indulgence, are faults to be found in a real sense, only in the system of the missionary gentlemen.

Secondly, the Hindoo Puranas and Tantras, in which the fictitious account is given, are subordinate to the Veda, but are not the very Veda itself: when they disagree with the Veda their authority is not regarded. " When the Veda and the Puranas disagree, the Veda "must be regarded; pious men will always explain the Puranas &c., "in agreement with what the Veda declares." (Quotation by the Smartta). But the missionary gentlemen consider the Bible as their Veda and in explaining it, have, in this manner, dishonoured God in a real sense. A real error, therefore, and an excess of error is discovered in their own system.

You have moreover asked, what advantage can be derived from the instructions of a spiritual teacher, who is himself ignorant of what he professes to teach? What advantage is there in adopting a spiritual teacher according to the popular practice in this country? I reply, this objection is not at all applicable to the Hindoo Sastra, because the Sastra enjoins that such a spiritual teacher must be chosen as is acquainted with what he teaches, but in choosing any other sort of spiritual teacher no spiritual benefit is obtained for the purpose of divine knowledge. "He, taking in his hand the sacrificial wood, must approach to a spiritual teacher who is well read in the Vedas and devoted to the faith of Brahma." (Mundaka Veda). "There are " many spiritual teachers who take the wealth of their disciples; but a " spiritual teacher who removes the errors of his disciples, O! goddess, " is difficult to be obtained" (Tantra). The definition of a spiritual teacher: "He is subdued in the members of his body and affections of " his mind, of honourable birth," &c. (Quotation by Krishnananda).

You say at the end, that according to one Hindoo Sastra, by means of works the body repeatedly becomes animate or inanimate; that,

according to another sect, after leaving the body there is either the eternal enjoyment of heaven or the eternal endurance of hell; and that according to another sect there is no future state. I answer,—It is not contained in any part of the Hindoo Sastra that there is no future state: this is an atheistical tenet. But it is true that the Sastra says, that even in this world, the consequences both of some good and some evil works are experienced, or God after death inflicts the consequences of the sins and holiness of some in hell and heaven, or the Supreme Ruler bestows the consequences of the sins and holiness of others, by giving them other bodies either animate or inanimate. In this what mutual disagreement appears such as you have attempted to establish? According to the Christian doctrine, likewise, there are various kinds of consequences attached to different actions; God even in this world gives the punishment of sins and rewards for holiness, as in the case of the Jews. It is written in the Bible, that even in this world God punished their sins and rewarded their holiness; moreover Jesus Christ himself has said, that by giving alms openly, fruit will be obtained only in this world;* and it is also written in the Bible that some have enjoyed good and suffered evil after death. By saying so, no inconsistency appears in the Bible; because God is the rewarder, and he gives some the consequences of their deeds in this world, others in the next. Christians all allow, that after the destruction of the body, God, at the time of judgment, gives a body to the spirit, and bestows on this corporeal spirit the consequences of its good and evil works. If they believe that, contrary to the laws of Nature, God can give a body to the spirit and make it receive the consequences of its works, then why should they express surprise, if, in consistency with these laws, God shall, by having given a body, bestow on the spirit in this world the consequences of its works? You have said that all the inhabitants of the world except those of Hindoostan receive no consequences of their works. Such a sentiment is not contained in any part of their Sastra. But you also say that all the other inhabitants of the world have no works; the meaning of which is that they have no rites prescribed by the Veda; which is indeed correct: therefore the Sastra is in every respect perfectly consistent. You will consider the same here of the Darsanas; that is, all the Darsanas call God incomprehensible; and above all, in considering the nature of other objects, those who

*Matthew, Chap. VI., v. 2

variously understood the meaning of the Veda expressed themselves differently. In the same manner although the commentators on the Bible in some parts disagree, this is no fault of the Bible and no diminution of the reputation of the commentators.

I have now written what I intended, respecting the errors which, as contrary to reason, you have stated to be in the Hindoo Sastra. The reverend missionaries are in Calcutta, Shreerampore and various other places. What is afterwards written, is intended to ascertain how far *their* doctrines are agreeable to reason.

They call Jesus Christ the Son of God and the very God :—How can the son be the very Father ?

They sometimes call Jesus Christ the Son of man, and yet say no man was his Father.

They say that God is one, and yet say that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God.

They say that God must be worshipped in spirit and yet they worship Jesus Christ as very God, although he is possessed of a material body.

They say that the Son is of the same essence and existence as the Father, and they also say that the Son is equal to the Father. But how can equality subsist except between objects possessed of different essences and existences ?

I shall be much obliged by answers to these enquiries.

SIVAPRASAD SARMA.

NUMBER THIRD

OF THE

BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE.

In the Friend of India No. 38 a reply has been made in English to the 2nd number of the Brahmunical Magazine composed both in English and Bengali and published a few weeks ago. As the controversy in question is intended by both parties chiefly for the benefit of the Hindoo community and secondarily for the use of Europeans, I feel much disappointed in my expectation of being favoured by the editor or his colleagues with a reply in English and Bengali to insert in the next number of my Magazine. I however must receive it as it is, and beg to be allowed to make a few remarks on the reply.

As to my first question proposed in the Magazine in the following words, "They call Jesus Christ the son of God and the very God—"how can the son be the very father?," the Editor denies the accuracy of the information on which I found this question, and firmly asserts that "the Bible nowhere says that the son is the father." I, therefore, deem it necessary to shew my reason for the above query, leaving it to the public to pronounce on the justifiableness of it, either in their conversation or religious publications. Christian teachers profess that God is one, and that Jesus Christ is the son of God. Hence I naturally concluded that they believe the son to be the father, and consequently questioned the reasonableness of such a doctrine. For when a person affirms that such a one, say James, is one, and that John is his son, and again says that John is actually James, we should naturally conclude that he means that John the son is James the father, and be at liberty to ask how can John the son be James the father? But as the Editor, a leading minister of that religion, declares that "the Bible nowhere says that the son is the father, but says that the son is equal to the father, in nature and essence" and "distinct in person" &c., and recommends me to reflect on mankind, of whom "every son, who has not the same human nature with his father, must be a monster": it would be too much boldness on my part to give preference to my

apprehension of the meaning of the Bible over that of the Editor. I would therefore have admitted (as suggested by the Editor) that the son of God is God, on the analogy and in the sense that the son of a man is a man, had I not been compelled by his very suggestion to reject entirely his other still more important assertion, that is, the coeval existence of the son with the father. For, the belief of the nature of the son of man being the same as that of the father, though it justifies the idea of the son of God being God, is utterly repugnant to the possibility of the son being coeval with his father. It is evident that if a son of man be supposed coeval with his father, he must be considered something more extraordinary than a monster!

It is believed by all religious sects, that when God reveals his will or law to the human race, he reveals it through their language in its common acceptation. I beg, therefore, of the Editor, to favour me with a direct reply to the following question.—Do the missionary gentlemen take the word "God" as a proper name or as a common one, all nouns being divided into two kinds, common and proper? In the former case, that is, if they consider the term "God" appropriated to one individual existence as every other proper name is, they must relinquish the idea of the son of God being the very God. How can we think the son of John or James to be John or James, or coeval with John or James? And in the latter case, that is, if they receive the term "God" as common name, they may maintain the opinion that the son of God is God in the same way as the son of a man is man, which, as the Editor says, "must necessarily be the case," but they, in this case, cannot be justified in professing a belief in the equal duration of the son with the father; for *every son, whatever may be his nature, must have existence originating subsequently to that of his own father*. The only difference between these two common nouns "God" and "man" would be, that the latter includes a great many individuals under it and the former only three distinct persons, though of superior power and nature. But no smallness of the number or mightiness of power of persons under one common name, can exclude it from being classed as a general noun; for it is well established by the observers of nature that the number of individuals comprised under the term "mankind" is much less, and their nature is far more mighty, than the living embryos in the milt of a single cod-fish—a circumstance which does not make man less a genus than the term fish.

We see individuals under one term of mankind, though they are distinct in person, yet one in nature, as being all men. In like manner three beings under one godhead, according to the Editor, though they are distinct in person are yet, I infer, considered by him one in nature as gods,—god the Father, god the son, and god the Holy Ghost. Is this the unity of God which the Editor professes? Can this doctrine justify him in ridiculing Hindoo polytheism, because many of them say, that under one Godhead there are more than three beings distinct in person but one in nature?

As to my third question "They say God is one, and yet say that "the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God", the Editor admits the fact, as he says, that "the Bible ascribes the same divine nature and perfections to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and yet declares that though distinct in person they are one in nature and attributes," that "it (the Bible) teaches men to worship each of them as God," and that "the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are "described in Scripture as equally giving grace and peace to men, as "pardoning sin and leading men into the paths of righteousness." But instead of shewing the reasonableness of the idea of three distinct gods being one God, as requested, he confesses the total inconsistency of this doctrine with reason and makes the Bible responsible for it, saying, "But the Bible, while it fully reveals these facts, still forbears "to inform us how the Father, the Son and the Holy spirit exist and "form the triune God"; and adds, "nor had it informed us, are we certain that we should have comprehended it." The Editor or his colleagues ought to have taken into consideration such unreasonableness attaching to the most important of all their doctrines before they had published in the "Samachar-Darpan" the letter accusing the Vedanta and the rest of the Hindoo Sastras of want of reason—a circumstance which might have saved the Editor the reluctant avowal of the unreasonableness of the foundation of his own system of faith. The Editor, however, attempts to procure belief for this doctrine so palpably contrary to reason and experience, under the plea that "there are many things which pass around and within us, of the "manner of which we can form no just idea, though no one doubts "their truth. We know not how plants and trees draw matter from "the earth and transform it into the leaves, flowers, and fruits, "although no one questions the fact;—nor how mind so acts upon "matter as to enable a man at will to raise his hand to his head, and

"with it to perform the hardest labour. Until we comprehend the "manner in which these operations on matter are effected, which "constantly pass around and within us, we have little reason to com-"plain, because the triune God has not condescended to inform us of "the precise mode in which his infinite and glorious nature exists and "acts." How is it possible for the Editor, or for any one possessed of common sense, not to perceive the gross error of drawing an analogy from things around and within us to the three distinct persons of the Godhead in one existence, which so far from being around or within us, exist only in the imagination of the missionaries?

Here the growth of a tree and its producing leaves and flowers, as well as the operation of mind on matter, being around and within us, are commonly perceptible by all men whether Christians or not Christians, a denial of which is utterly impossible for one who is possessed of the senses. It is very true that the exact manner in which plants grow or the mind operates, and the precise principles of nature which act upon them, are not thoroughly understood. But all that these facts amount to is, that things around or within us, whether visible or demonstrated by visible facts, compel conviction. Do the three distinct persons of Godhead in unity exist like growing trees or bodies joined to mind? Are they phenomena commonly perceptible alike by Christians and non-Christians? Or are they like mountains of ice in northern countries, which, though they are not seen or felt by us, yet are reported to us by eye-witnesses, without any contradiction from others who have also passed the places where they are said to exist, and where they are liable to be seen by any one, that we should be compelled to believe the existence of the triune God like that of growing trees, operating minds, or mountains of ice, though we cannot understand them; or rather though we find them exactly contrary to what we have understood? Christians may perhaps consider the Trinity as perceptible by them through the force of early instructions, in the same manner as the followers of the Tantra doctrines among Hindoos in Bengal consider God as consisting of five distinct persons and yet as one God, and as the generality of modern Hindoos esteem numerous incarnations under one Godhead almost as an experienced fact from their early habits. How can Christians, who in general justly pride themselves on their cultivated understanding, admit such an analogy or justify any one in misleading others with such sophistries? The only excuse which I feel inclined to make for them, and perhaps

a true one, is, that the enlightened amongst them, like several of the Greek and Roman philosophers, yield, through policy, to the vulgar opinions, though fully sensible of the unjustifiableness of them. I am, however, sorry to observe that the minds of a great number of Christians are so biassed in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity from the strong impression made on them by education in their youth, that they can readily defy the suggestions of the senses, reason, and experience in opposition to this doctrine. They accuse Brahmanical priests of having an unjust ascendancy over their pupils, while they forget how greatly Christians are influenced by their ministers so as to overlook the error of such an analogy as the above, and others of a similar nature.

The Editor has first declared that "the Bible forbears to inform "us how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist," &c., "the "triune God has not condescended to inform us of the precise mode in "which his infinite and glorious nature exists and acts";—nevertheless as he particularizes the mode of their existence and actions separately and distinctly from the authority of the Bible, stating that "the Son who has existed with the Father from enternity has "created heaven and earth" that "from his infinite pity to sinful men "he condescended *to lay aside his glory for a season*;" that "taking "on himself *the form of a servant* he might worship and obey the "father as his God"; that "he prayed his father to glorify him only "with his own glory which he had with his father before the founda-"tion of the world and which for a season he had laid aside;" that "he was permitted to ascend up where he was before;" and that lastly "he was seated at the right-hand of the Majesty on high" who "gave him as mediator all power in heaven and earth;" and that "God the Spirit was also pleased to testify to men his approba-"tion of the Son's becoming incarnate, by visibly descending upon "him in the form of a dove." Notwithstanding their different locations, different actions and distinct existences, the Editor represents them as one, and also demands of the rest of the world a belief in their unity. Is it possible even to conceive for a moment the identity between three Beings, one of them in heaven expressing his pleasure at the conduct of the second, who at the same time on the earth was performing religious rites, and the third of them then residing between heaven and earth descending on the second at the will of the first. If the difference of bodies and situations as well as of

actions and employments, be not sufficient to set aside the idea of the identity and real unity of persons, there would be no means of distinguishing one person from another, and no criterion would be left for considering a tree different from a rock or a bird from a man. Is this the doctrine which the Editor ascribes to God? And can any book, which contains an idea that defies the use of the senses, be considered worthy to be ascribed to that Being who has endued the human race with senses and understanding for their use and guidance? As long as men have the use of their senses and faculties, (unless sunk in early prejudices) they never can be expected to be deluded by any circumlocutions founded upon circumstances not only beyond understanding but also contrary to experience and to the evidence of the senses. God the Son is declared by the Editor to have *laid aside his glory* for a season, and to have prayed his father to give him the same glory, and also to have taken the *form of a servant*. Is it consistent with the nature of the *immutable God to lay aside* any part of his condition and *to pray for it* again? Is it conformable to the nature of *the Supreme Ruler* of the universe *to take the form of a servant*, though only for a season? Is this the true idea of God which the Editor maintains? Even idolaters among Hindoos have more plausible excuses for their polytheism. I shall be obliged, if the Editor can shew that the polytheistical doctrines maintained by Hindoos are, in any degree, more unreasonable than his own. If not, he will not, I trust, endeavour in future to introduce among them one set of polytheistical sentiments as a substitute for another set; *both of them* being *equally* and *solely* protected by the *shield of mystery*.

The Editor acknowledges the fact of God's appearing in the shape of a dove to testify the appointment of God the Son, stating, that "when God renders himself visible to man, it must be by "appearing in some form." But I wonder how, after such acknowledgment the Editor can ridicule the idea of God's appearing in the shape of a fish or cow, which is entertained by the Pauranika* Hindoos? Is not a fish as innocent as a dove? Is not a cow more useful than a pigeon?

All that I said of the Holy Ghost, is as follows: "Did not the "Holy Ghost, who is very God, in the form of a dove remove from one "place to another? and did he not beget Jesus Christ by his divine "intercourse with a woman?"—alluding in the former question to his

* Mythologist or mythological.

descent on Jesus Christ, when baptized, in the shape of a dove, and in the latter to his having begot Christ by a woman not married to him, as is evident from their Scriptures: "She was found with "child of the Holy Ghost": * "The Holy Ghost shall come upon "thee." † Both of these circumstances is solemnly acknowledged by the Editor. But whence or how the Editor infers again my misrepresentation of the fact, and my attempt to ridicule the doctrine, I am unable to discover.

As to my fourth question, viz., "They say that God must be "worshipped in spirit and yet they worship Jesus Christ as very God, "although he is possessed of a material body," the Editor has given an evasive answer; for he says, "Christians worship Jesus Christ "and not his body separately from him." I never charged Christians in my question with worshipping the body of Jesus Christ separately from himself, that the Editor could be justified in denying Christians having worshipped him and not his body. The Editor in fact confesses their adoration of Jesus Christ as the very God in the material form: nevertheless he attempts to maintain that they worship God in spirit. If we admit that the worship of spirit possessed of material body is worship in spirit, we must not any longer impute idolatry to any religious sect, for none of them adore mere matter unconnected with spirit. Did the Greeks and Romans worship the bodies of Jupiter and Juno and their other supposed gods separately from their respective spirits? Are not the miraculous works ascribed by them to these gods, proofs of their viewing them as spirits connected with the body? Do the idolaters among Hindoos worship the assumed forms of their incarnations divested of their spirit? Nothing of the kind! Even in worshipping idols Hindoos do not consider them objects of worship until they have performed Pranapratishtha or communication of divine life. According to the definition given by the Editor, none of them can be supposed idolaters, because they never worship the body separately from the spirit! But in fact any worship through either an artificial form or imaginary material representation is nothing but idolatry.

Moreover, the Editor says that "the Father, Son and Holy Ghost "are also described in scripture, as equally giving grace and peace "to man, as pardoning sin and leading men in the paths of righteous-

* Matthew, Chap. 1. v. 18. † Luke, Chap. 1. v. 35.

"ness, which things omniscience, omnipotence, infinite love and mercy "can alone perform." I do not know any polytheistical system more clear than this description of the Editor as declaring three Beings equally omniscient, omnipotent, and possessed of infinite mercy. I, however, beg to ask, whether the omnipotence, omniscience, and infinite mercy of one person is sufficient or not to arrange the universal system and preserve its harmony? If so, an admission of the omnipotence and omniscience of the second and the third is superfluous and absurd; but if not sufficient, why should we stop at the number three and not carry on the numeration until the number of omnipotent Beings becomes at least equal to that of the heavenly bodies, ascribing to each the management of every globe. From the skill which Europeans generally display in conducting political affairs and effecting mechanical inventions, foreigners very often conclude that their religious doctrines would be equally reasonable; but as soon as any one of them is made acquainted with such doctrines as are professed by the Editor and by a great number of his countrymen, he will firmly believe that religious truth has no connection with political success.

My fifth question was, "How can equality subsist except between objects possessed of different essences and existences?" But the Editor repeats only a part of it, *i.e.* how the son can be equal with the father, when he does possess the same nature, and then declares the question unintelligible. I never meant the impossibility of equality between persons or things that possess the same nature, as we find often equality in some property subsisting between man and man though possessing the same nature; but as no equality can subsist except between things of different *existences*, and the professed belief of the missionary gentleman was that the Son is the same in existence as well as in nature with the father, I took the liberty to ask how the son can be equal with the father, when he is supposed to be possessed of the same *nature* and *existence*? Unless they deny to the Son the same existence with the Father, they cannot, I think, maintain his equality with the Father. I, therefore, presume, my question is perfectly intelligible.

As to my second remark, viz., "They sometimes call Jesus Christ the son of man, and yet say no man was his Father," the Editor makes the following reply,—"While, thus incarnate, he in many ways unavoidably displayed his divine nature; but being born of a woman and in all things like unto us as to his human nature, yet

without sin, he condescended to call himself the Son of man, although no man was his Father." I wonder that the Editor, who on the one hand attempts so warmly to prove the deity and inspiration of Jesus Christ, on the other hand accuses the same being of having declared, what was totally contrary to the fact, saying, that he condescended *to call himself the Son of man, although no man was his father*. I also feel surprized at the inconsistency of the Editor, who, while justifying the above statement respecting his Lord, charges the Hindoo Pauranikas with falsity, because the Puranas, in instructing men of weak understanding, have made allegorical representations of God, though they repeatedly confess the allegorical nature of their instructions and explain their motives for introducing them. Besides, he imputes false representation to one of the commentators of the Veda, and that only in his instructing the ignorant in a parabolical manner, and from this single circumstance he condemns "the whole of the Hindoo System."

In the very reply of the Editor, I find the phrase "at the right "hand of God" quoted by the Editor as a scriptural expression. I therefore beg to know whether the phrase "the right hand of God" implies a true representation of God, or not? I find the following expressions even within the three first chapters of the Bible: "he "(God) rested on the seventh day from all his work;" "The Lord God "walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" "And (God) said "unto him (Adam) where art thou?" Did Moses mean by the term "rested" that God ceased to act from fatigue, and attempt to prove the mutableness of God? Did he mean by the phrase "God "walked in the cool of the day" that he moved by means of legs, like men in general, in the cool of the day to avoid the heat of the weather? Or did he mean by the question "Where art thou?" to imply the previous ignorance of the omniscient God? If so, Moses had strange ideas of Jehovah, and but little better than those maintained by his contemporary heathens. I am, however, inclined to think that Moses made use of these expressions conformable to the understanding of the ignorant Jews of his days without subjecting himself to the charge of falsehood; and this, I am informed by Christians, was the opinion of ancient teachers called Fathers of the Church, as well as of many modern learned Christians.

The Editor expresses his joy at "perceiving that the natives have "begun to arouse themselves from that state of morbid apathy and

"insensibility which is a certain symptom of moral death and of "universal corruption of manners," &c. I cannot help feeling compassion for his total want of knowledge of the literary employment and domestic conduct of the native community at large, notwithstanding his long residence in India. During only a few years past, hundreds of works on different subjects, such as Theology, Law, Logic, Grammar, and Astronomy, have been written by the natives of Bengal alone. I do not wonder that they have not reached the knowledge of the Editor, who, in common with all his colleagues, has shut his eyes against anything that might do the smallest credit to the natives. As to the "moral death" ascribed to them by the Editor, I might easily draw a comparison between the domestic conduct of the natives and that of the inhabitants of Europe, to shew where the grossest deficiency lies; but as such a dispute is entirely foreign to the present controversy, I restrain myself from so disagreeable a subject, under the apprehension that it might excite general displeasure.

As to the abusive terms made use of by the Editor, such as "Father "of lies alone to whom it (Hindooism) evidently owes its origin," "Impure fables of his false gods," "Pretended gods of Hindoos;" &c., common decency prevents me from making use of similar terms in return. We must recollect that we have engaged in solemn religious controversy and not in retorting abuse against each other.

I conclude this reply with expressing my hope that the Editor, on noticing it, will arrange his observations methodically, giving an answer to each of my five questions in succession, that the public may judge with facility of the arguments employed on both sides.

THE

BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE

OR

THE MISSIONARY AND THE BRAHMUN.

TO BE CONTINUED OCCASIONALLY.

No. IV.

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PREFACE.

Notwithstanding my humble suggestions in the third number of this Magazine, against the use of offensive expressions in religious controversy, I find, to my great surprize and concern, in a small tract lately issued from one of the missionary presses and distributed by missionary gentlemen, direct charges of *atheism* made against the doctrines of the Vedas, and undeserved reflections on us as their followers. This has induced me to publish, after an interval of two years, a fourth number of the Brahmunical Magazine.

In accordance with the mild and liberal spirit of universal toleration, which is well-known to be a fundamental principle of Hindooism, I am far from wishing to oppose any system of religion, much less Christianity; and my regard for the feelings of its professors would restrain me from thus exposing its errors, were they not forced upon my notice by the indiscreet assaults still made by Christian writers on the Hindoo religion. But when they scruple not to wound the feelings of a Hindoo, by attacking the most ancient and sacred oracles of his faith, the inspired Vedas, which have been revered from generation to generation, for time immemorial, should he submit to such wanton aggression without endeavouring to convince these gentlemen, that, in the language of their own Scripture, they "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" (Matt. XXIII., 24)? Hence they may at least learn *from experience* a lesson of *Charity*, which they are ready enough to inculcate upon others, overlooking, at the same time, the precept given by their God: "Do unto others as you would wish to be done by," implying, that if you wish others to treat your religion respectfully, you should not throw offensive reflections upon the religion of others.

I shall still be extremely glad to enter upon a minute investigation of the comparative merits of our respective religions, more especially if the Christian writers carry on the controversy in moderate and decorous language, worthy of literary characters and sincere inquirers after truth.

CHAPTER I.

A reply to certain queries directed against the Vedanta.

A few queries written in the Bengali language, having again issued from the Mission Press, Sreerampore, directed against the Vedanta system of religion, and a missionary gentleman having brought these queries to the notice of our friend, Rammohun Roy, I naturally expected that the latter would publish a reply.

Disappointed in my expectation, and much hurt at the stigma thrown upon the religion which I profess, following the divine guidance of the Vedas and the dictates of pure reason, I deem it incumbent upon me to defend what I believe to be true, against so unprovoked an aggression.

In his prefatory lines, the author says, that from reading the translation of the Vedanta by Rammohun Roy, he understands that the Vedas declare a knowledge of God to be unattainable by man, and therefore he begs that Rammohun Roy will cease to impart their doctrines until he shall acquire a knowledge of the Deity from some other religious source.

This author, in common with a great number of his fellow-believers, not resting contented with the perversion and misrepresentation of the purport of his own Bible, has been zealously endeavouring to misquote the writings, revered by others as sacred authority, for the purpose of exposing them to ridicule. To prove this assertion I quote here the very first passage of the translation of the abridgement of the Vedanta by Rammohun Roy, to which the querist refers in his prefatory lines.—viz.

"The illustrious Vyasa, in his celebrated work, the Vedanta, "insinuates in the first text, that it is absolutely necessary for man-"kind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being; but he "found from the following passages of the Vedas that this inquiry is "*limited to very narrow bounds*.—Vyasa also, from the result of "various arguments coinciding with the Veda, found that an *accurate* "and *positive* knowledge of the Supreme Being, is not within the "boundary of comprehension, *i.e.*, *what* and *how* the Supreme Being "is, cannot be *definitely* ascertained. He has, therefore, in the second

"text, *explained* the Supreme Being by his *effects* and *works*, without "attempting to *define* his *essence*."

Now my readers will plainly perceive in the above quotation, that a perfect knowledge respecting the nature and essence of the Deity is, declared in the Vedanta "to be unattainable:" while a knowledge of his existence through "his effects and works" is duly revealed by the Veda and consequently is zealously studied and imparted by us. We find in the Christian Scriptures declarations to the same purport. Psalm CXLV. "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is *unsearchable*." Job XXXVI. 26. God is great and we *know him not: neither* can the number of his years *be searched out*." Will the author of these queries justify any one in following his example, by suggesting to the missionary gentlemen not to inculcate Christian doctrines; on the ground that the Scriptures declare a knowledge of God and the number of the years of his existence *unsearchable*? I think he will not listen to such a suggestion, and will perhaps say in defence of the missionaries, that since the real nature of God is said in Scripture to be unsearchable, they have never attempted to preach the divine nature and essence. If such be their defence, how could prejudice completely shut the eyes of this interrogator against the plain declaration found in the translation of the Vedanta both in Bengalee and English, which he says he has read: *viz.*, "He (Vyasa) has, therefore, in the second text, explained the "Supreme Being by his *effects* and *works* without attempting to define "his essence."

In answer to his first query, *i.e.*, "Did one God create the world "or not?" I refer him to the next passage and to a subsequent passage of the same translation of the Vedanta, *viz.*, "*He*, by whom the birth, "existence, and annihilation of the world is regulated, is the Supreme "Being." "All the Vedas prove nothing but the *unity* of the Supreme Being." "God is indeed one and has *no second*." These passages will, I hope, be sufficient to convince the querist, that the doctrine of the *unity* of God is an essential principle of the Vedanta system, however unwelcome it may be to him, as opposing his favorite notion of three Gods, or three Persons equally powerful under an *abstract idea of Godhead*

In reply to his second query (*i.e.*, "Does God preserve this world or not? and is his word our rule or not?") consisting of two questions, I have merely to quote the following passages of the same translation

of the Vedanta, which as they apply to each severally, I place under two separate heads. 1st. "He from whom the universal world "proceeds, who is the *support of the world*, and he, whose work is the "universe, is the Supreme Being." "Who is the *almighty* and the "*sole regulator* of the universe." 2nd. "God is declared to be the "cause of all the Vedas." "Rules and rites (are) prescribed by the "Veda." The former quotations prove that God is the sole support of the world; and the latter declare that the Veda is the law of God, revealed and introduced for our rule and guidance.

As queries 3rd, 4th, and 5th, are in fact one query, I repeat them as they stand and make one reply: "Is God with or without attributes? If God is destitute of all attributes, then how can a rule of right and wrong be recognized? If you say that God is destitute of all attributes, then what is the difference between your principles and those of an atheist?" I reply: The Vedanta, does not ascribe to God any power or attribute *according to the human notion* of properties or modes being attached or subordinate to their substance, such as the faculty of vision, or of wisdom, compassion, anger, &c., in rational animals. Because these properties are sometimes found among the human race in full operation, and again ceasing to operate, as if they were quite extinct; because the power of one of these attributes is often impeded by the operation of another; and because the object in which they exist, depends upon special members of the body, such as the eyes, brain, heart, &c., for the exercise of vision, wisdom, compassion, &c.

In consideration of the incompatibility of such defects with the perfection of the divine nature, the Vedanta declares the very identity of God to be the substitute of the perfection of all the attributes necessary for the creation and support of the universe, and for introducing revelation among men, without representing these attributes as separate properties, depended upon by the Deity, in creating and ruling the world. Hence the Vedanta confesses the impossibility of any perfect knowledge of the Divine nature, although to adapt itself to the understanding of beginners in the study of theology, it often ascribes to God such attributes as are held excellent among the human species; as truth, mercy, justice, &c. See again the same translation. "The Veda having at first explained the Supreme Being by different epithets, begins with the word *Atha* or *now*, and declares, that all descriptions which have been used to describe the Supreme

Being are imperfect (ideal), because he (the Divine Being) by no means can be described."

Now, unbiassed readers will judge, which of these two opinions is the more consistent with reason and divine revelation, to wit, the denying of properties to God according to the human notion of qualities in objects, as done by the Vedanta; or the equalising of the number of Gods, or persons under a Godhead, with the number of the supposed principal qualities belonging to the Deity (namely Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification) as practised by the querist and his fellow-believers, who have provided themselves with a God the Father, for the work of creation, a God the Son, for redemption and a God the Holy Ghost, for sanctification.

I do not wonder, that our religious principles are compared with those of atheists, by one, whose ideas of the divine nature are so gross, that he can consider God, as having been born * and circumcised †, as having grown ‡ and been subject to parental authority,§ as eating and drinking,|| and even as dying ¶ and as having been totally annihilated (though for three days only, the period intervening from the crucifixion of Christ to his resurrection); nor can it give me any concern, if a person, labouring under such extravagant fancies, should, at the same time, insinuate atheism against us, since he must thereby only expose himself to the derision of the discerning public.

As to his sixth and seventh queries, viz. "Do not wicked "actions proceed in this world from the depravity of mankind?" 7th. "By what penance can that guilt be expiated, which men contract by the practice of wickedness?" I beg to observe, that a desire of indulging the appetites and of gratifying the passions is, by nature, common to man with the other animals. But the Vedas, coinciding with the natural desire of social intercourse implanted in the human constitution, as the original cause of sympathy** with others, require of men to moderate those appetites and regulate those passions, in a manner calculated to preserve the peace and comfort of society, and secure their future happiness; so that mankind may maintain their superiority over the rest of the animal creation, and benefit by one another. For each person to indulge without restraint all the appetites and passions, would be destructive of the harmony of society, which

* Luke II. 7. † Luke II. 21. ‡ Luke II. 40.
§ Luke II. 51. || Matth. XI. 19. ¶ Mark XIV. 34.

** Even birds and beasts sympathise with their associates of the opposite sex and with their young, in proportion to the extent of their desire for social enjoyment.

mankind is naturally desirous to preserve. These sentiments are contained in the following passages of the same translation of the Vedanta, viz., "A command over our passions and over the external senses "of the body, and good acts, are declared by the Veda to be indis-"pensable in the mind's approximation to God. They should, there-"fore, be strictly taken care of, and attended to both previously and "subsequently to such approximation to the Supreme Being."

In the constant internal struggles between this desire of indulgence, always working powerfully upon the mind, and the social inclination, displayed in various modes, according to the difference of circumstances, of habits, and of education, some yield often to the passions. In that case the only means of attaining an ultimate victory over them is sincere repentance and solemn meditation, which occasion mental disquiet and anxiety forming the punishment of sin; and which are calculated to prevent future surrenders to the passions on similar occasions. The sin which mankind contracts against God, by the practice of wickedness, is believed by us to be expiated by these penances, and not, as supposed by the querist, by the blood of a son of man or son of God, who never participated in our transgressions.

His last query is, "Will mankind at last be certainly raised and judged? and will they suffer or enjoy according to their works or not? In reply to which I beg to observe, that the Vedanta does not confine the reward or punishment of good or evil works to the state after death, much less to a particular day of judgment; but it reveals positively, that a man suffers or enjoys, according to his evil or good deeds, frequently even in this world,—a doctrine which is not, I think, at variance with the first part of the Christian Bible. See the above translation. "From devotion to God *all* the desired consequences proceed" (meaning of course in this world also). "He, who has no faith in the Supreme Being, is rendered subject to these gods" (properly speaking *grand objects*).

In conclusion, he makes some other insinuations against the Vedanta; one of which is, that it declares the mind to be God; and consequently that those who adhere to this religion, must follow their natural propensities, and the suggestions of their own minds merely, not the revealed authority of God. I therefore quote these lines found in that very translation, from which the querist draws this conclusion, and leave the public to judge, whether he is not entirely

deprived, even of common sense, by rooted religious prejudice, in examining the writings of others, that are not persuaded to think exactly like him and his fellow-believers, viz., "The Vedas not only "call the celestial representations deities; but also, in many ins-"tances, give this divine epithet to the mind, diet, void space, quad-"rupeds, animals and slaves:—But *neither* any of the celestial gods "*nor any* existing creature can *be considered the Lord of the universe*, "because the third Chapter of the Vedanta explains, that by these "appellations of the Veda, which denote the diffusive spirit of the "Supreme Being equally over all creatures, by means of extension, "his omnipresence is established." "Because the Veda declares the "performance of these rules to be the cause of the *mind's purification* "and *its faith* in God,"

If notwithstanding these explanations offered by the Vedanta, the querist persists in his attempt to stigmatise the Veda, and thus argue, that any being declared by the Veda to be God, though figuratively, should be considered as God in reality, by the followers of that system, I would refer him to his own Bible, which in the same figurative sense applies the term "God" to the prophets and the chiefs of Israel, and identifies God with abstract properties, such as love, &c.; and I then ask the querist, whether he admits them to be real Gods and offers his worship to them? and whether he be a follower of the dictates of the powerful passion of love in its most unlimited sense?

His second insinuation is this, that the Vedanta does not forbid the worship of gods and goddesses; and how then can the unity of God be inferred from that work? I reply: The Supreme Being is presented throughout the whole Vedanta System *as the only object of true adoration*, of which the querist will be convinced, if he refers to the following passages of the same translation, viz., "The worship "authorised by all the Vedas is of *one nature*: as the direction for "the worship of the *only* Supreme Being is *invariably* found in every "part of the Veda. The following passages of the Veda affirm that "God *is* the *sole* object of worship, viz., 'Adore. God *alone*' 'Know "God alone.'" With regard to the suggestions about the worship of other objects besides the Deity, the following explanation is given in the Vedanta. "These, as well as several other texts of the same "nature, are not real commands, but only direct those, (for instance "idiots) who are *unfortunately* incapable of adoring the invisible

"Supreme Being, to apply their minds to any visible thing, rather "than allow them to remain idle."

In replying, as above, to all the "Christian's" queries and insinuations, I have *confined* my quotations to the translations of the abridgment of the Vedanta—an essay of 21 pages—to which the querist referred in his prefatory lines; so that my readers may perceive that had the querist read only that small work, divesting himself of religious prejudice, he would not have needed to put those questions.

CHAPTER II.

Reasons of a Hindoo for rejecting the doctrines of Christianity.

The querist then proceeds to direct personality, maintaining that, in common with Rammohun Roy, there are individuals in England, who regard the mind as God, and surrender themselves entirely to its suggestions; since they receive, he alleges, only such portions of the Bible as suit their convenience and reject the rest; and he confidently pronounces the doctrines which Rammohun Roy inculcates to be *all atheistical*. As these individuals must be better qualified than I can be to vindicate themselves from the charge of perverting the Scriptures, I need say nothing on this subject. I cannot, however, totally pass over the charge of atheism against the doctrines which I, in common with my friend, inculcate; and therefore beg to be allowed to make in this instance a few observations which may lead my readers to enter upon an impartial investigation and to compare the religious opinions which the followers of the Vedant maintain with those that the querist and his fellow Christians profess.

The querist probably means, that these individuals reject or misinterpret that portion of the Bible which relates to the Trinity and the atonement of Christ, both considered by the querist and his fellow-believers as the essential principles of Christianity. I have consequently attentively read the Bible of Christians; but to my great astonishment, I have been unable to find any explanation of the Trinity in that book. I have therefore directed my attention to their creed and some of the works of celebrated Christian writers, in the former of which I find the Triune God thus explained:

"The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God; and "yet there are not three Gods but one God." I shall therefore submit

to the querist and his fellow-believers cases exactly parallel to this doctrine, as differently viewed by learned Christians, and ask him whether he can ever persuade himself to admit their possibility?—1st. John is *homo* or a man, James is *homo* or a man, and Jacob is *homo* or a man, and yet there are not three *homines* or men but one man. 2nd. At the time when the whole human race, as stated in the Christian Scriptures, consisted of only three persons, it might have been, in like manner, asserted, that, "Adam is *homo* (or a person), Eve is *homo* "(or a person) and Cain is *homo* (or a person); but there are not three "*homines* (or persons) but one person," the three being included under the abstract notion of *mankind*. 3rd. The father is *sacerdos* (or a priest), the son is *sacerdos* (or a priest) and the grandson is *sacerdos* (or a priest), and yet there are not three *sacerdotes* (or priests) but one priest under an abstract notion of the "priesthood." 4th. Wisdom is *qualitas* (or a quality), power is *qualitas* (or a quality) and love is *qualitas* (or a quality) and yet there are not three *qualitates* (or qualities) but one quality. 5th. Creation is *opus* (or a work), Redemption is *opus* (or a work), Sanctification is *opus* (or a work), and yet there are not three *opera* or works, but one work.

I regret that notwithstanding very great mental exertions, I am unable to attain a comprehension of this Creed.

These missionary gentlemen have come out to this country in the expectation, that grown men should first give up the use of their external senses, and should profess seriously, that although the Father is ONE God and the Son is ONE God and the Holy Ghost is ONE God, yet that the number of Gods does not exceed ONE—a doctrine which although unintelligible to others, having been imbibed by these pious men with their mothers' milk, is of course as familiar to them as the idea of the animation of the stony goddess "Kali" is to an idolatrous Hindoo, by whom it has, in like manner, been acquired in his infancy.

A man does not, under various circumstances, always refuse to believe things that are beyond his comprehension; but he will find it very hard, if not utterly impossible, to believe what is diametrically opposite to his senses, to his experience, to the uniform course of nature, and to the first axioms of reason: to wit, that there is *first* the Father-Deity, who is distinctly and by himself God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, that there is *secondly* the Son-Deity, who is distinctly and by himself God omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and that there is *thirdly* the Holy Ghost Deity, (in the neuter gender)

which is distinctly and by *itself* God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet in defiance of the immutable principles of mathematical science, that these Deities amount to *no more* than *one*.

Exclusive of the writings of the ancient and modern Popish Theologists and those of Dissenters from the Episcopal creed, I find, to my still greater surprise, in the works of some celebrated Christian writers, who are held as the most distinguished members of the Church of England, the most palpably contradictory explanation given of this Trinity, some of which I here notice.

First. Dr. Waterland, Dr. Taylor, and Archbishop Secker maintain that the Trinity consists of three distinct, independent, and equal persons constituting one and the same God thus representing the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost as three distinct substances under one Godhead.

2ndly. Dr. Wallis was an advocate for the Sabellian hypothesis, and probably Archbishop Tillotson, holding that three persons in the Trinity are only three modes or relations, which the Deity bears to his creatures,—thus declaring the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be three qualities, existing of course in the abstract notion of the God-head, which exists only in our imagination.

3rdly. Bishop Pearson, as well as Bishop Bull, and Dr. Owen suppose the Father to be an underived and essential essence and the Son to have received every thing by communication from God the Father. "There can be but one person," (says Bishop Pearson), "originally of himself, subsisting in that infinite Being, because a "plurality of more persons so subsisting would necessarily infer a "multiplicity of Gods." "The Son possessed" (says he,) "the whole "nature by *communication* not by *participation* and *in such way* that "he was as really God as the father." *i.e.*, this third explanation contradicts the first with regard to the original deity of the second and third persons, and is entirely opposed to the second explanation.

4thly. Bishop Burgess supposes the three persons of the Deity to make one. God, but does not allow that these persons are three beings, urging that "the Scriptures declare that there is but only one "God.—The same Scriptures declare that there are three omnipresent "persons; but there cannot be two omnipresent beings; therefore "the three omnipresent persons can be only one God." According to this hypothesis, the Trinity is made up of three persons, each of which is not a being, *i.e.*, of three nonentities.

5thly. In the system of Dr. Thomas Burnet, the Father is held to be a self-existent Being, the Son, and the Holy Ghost dependent; and he thinks that divine perfections and worship may be ascribed to each; which somewhat resembles the Arian Creed.

6th. Mr. Baxter defines the three divine Persons to be Wisdom, Power, and Love and illustrates his meaning by the vital power, intellect and will in the soul of man, *i.e.*, he compares the three persons with qualities—an opinion which resembles what was maintained by Sabellius and his followers.

7thly. Bishop Gastrell says "The three names of God the Father, "Son, and Holy Ghost must denote a three-fold difference or distinc-"tion belonging to God, but such as is consistent with the unity "and simplicity of the divine nature, for each of these includes the "*whole* idea of God and *something more*. So far as they express the "nature of God, they all adequately and exactly signify the same. "It is the additional signification, which makes all the distinction "between them," *i. e.*, according to Bishop Gastrell, "the Father "includes the *whole* idea of God and *something more*; the son includes "the *whole* idea of God and *something more*; the Holy Ghost includes "the *whole* idea of God and *something more*: while altogether, the "Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost make one entire God, and no "more." Here this learned prelate introduces a new axiom, *viz.*, that a part is greater than, or at least, equal to the whole.

8thly. According to Mr. Howe's theory, there are three distinct, intelligent hypostases, each having a distinct, intelligent nature, united in some inexplicable manner so as to make one God in somewhat the same way as the corporeal, sensitive, and intellectual faculties are united to form one man, *i. e.*, he gives us to understand that the Godhead is something more than the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in the same manner as a complete man is something more than the corporeal, sensitive and intellectual faculties.

9thly. Dr. Sherlock says, "The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, "are *as really distinct* Persons as Peter, James, and John, each of "which is God. We must allow each Person to be a God. These "three infinite minds are distinguished, just as three created minds "are, by self-consciousness. And by mutual consciousness, each person "of these has the *whole* wisdom, power and goodness of the other two." *i.e.*, this divine sets forth a system of perfect polytheism; but does not, like the others, offer any apology for it.

10thly. Dr. Heber, the present Bishop of Calcutta, maintains that the second and third persons in the Trinity are no other than the angels *Michael* and *Gabriel*. It was the Second Person, who conversed with Moses from Mount Sinai, and the third person, who constituted the Jewish Shekinah.

The theory of the Godhead proposed by this pious and learned prelate, although it is at variance with the opinions of several other divines, must yet be gratifying to Hindoo Theologians, who have long cherished the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of spirits from one body to another. Since, the belief in the Second Person of the Godhead, originally a mere spirit, taking at one time, according to this theory, the form of an *Angel* (Michael) and afterwards assuming the body of *Man* (Jesus Christ) by means of natural birth, which was effected, as is said, by the Virgin Mary and the angel Gabriel—countenances the doctrine of the migration of spirits from the bodies of superior to those of inferior creatures.

Are not these explanations of the Trinity, given by the persons most versed in the Scriptures, sufficient to puzzle any man, if not drive him to atheism? Supposing a Hindu or a Mussalman were ready and willing to embrace the Christian faith, would he not sincerely repent of his rashness, as soon as he discovered that the accounts of the essence of the Christian religion, given by the principal persons of the Church, are as opposite to each other as the west is to the east? Would he not be utterly astonished at the idea, that a nation who are so celebrated for their progress in the arts and sciences, for the enjoyment of political and civil liberty, and for their freedom of inquiry and discussion, should neglect their religious faith so much as to allow it still to stand upon the monstrously absurd basis of popery?*

I myself, however, am not surprised at the many contradictory accounts they have given of the Trinity; because when the building is the mere creature of *fancy*, it is not to be expected that its architects should well agree in their description of its form and proportions. Nor do I wonder at this faith being forsaken by a great number of intelligent European gentlemen, whom the orthodox are fond of stigmatizing as *Infidels*, since it appears to me, that any

* By a reference to the Histories of the ancient Greeks and Romans and to those of Chungiz Khan and others, the readers may be convinced that truth and true religion do not always accompany wealth, power and conquest, high names or lofty palaces

person endowed with a moderate share of common sense, not entirely perverted by early prejudices thrust upon him in the helpless infancy of his mind, must be able to tear off the parti-coloured veil of sophistry from the face of this Creed and discover its real monstrosity.

Instead of stigmatizing those Gentlemen, the Missionaries ought, I think, to have thanked them gratefully, for the safe standing of the frail edifice of their extraordinary creed, since it is the indifference of a great number of learned Europeans about the religion which they from policy profess, accompanied with the bigoted adherence to Christianity imposed upon a considerable portion of men of the middling class, which, and which alone, has been hitherto the cause of the security of a faith contradictory to common sense and opposed to the evidence of the senses, in a nation so highly exalted by its literature.

Some well-meaning Christians plausibly argue, that, whether the doctrine of the Trinity be reasonable or not,—what does it signify, this being a mere matter of speculation,—if the practical parts of Christianity and its religous observances are salutary?

In the first place I wish to know, whether the Missionaries preach the practical parts of Christianity separately from the doctrine of the Trinity and that of the atonement, or whether, on the contrary, they do not consider these doctrines to be the fundamental principles of the Christian Faith, so that, no man can possibly benefit by the practical parts of Christianity, unless he is enabled to pervert his senses, so far as to believe in the truth of these doctrines? If the latter be the case, these well-meaning persons, will, I trust excuse the rejection of Christianity by the grown up natives of India, in consideration of the great difficulty or rather impossibility every one must encounter who attempts to enforce belief upon himself or upon others.

In the second place I take the liberty of asking these well-meaning Gentlemen, whether it is a matter of speculation to believe *one* to be *three* and *three* to be *one*? Whether it is a matter of opinion to bring ourselves to believe that a *perfect man* is *perfect God*, or in other words, that a complete man is not a man? Whether it is a matter of speculation to be convinced that an object confined to a small portion of the Earth comprehends literally *all* the *fulness* of the Deity bodily, and spreads over the whole universe? Is it also

a matter of speculation that God whom Christians and their Scripture represent as mere spirit and as the author of the universe, was of the very seed of the Jewish Patriarch Abraham. and of the Jewish King David? If these be matters of opinion, what then are matters grossly repugnant to reason and contrary to fact? The almighty and eternal Being (according to these Christian theologians) was *born*, *grew to* manhood, suffered and died a shameful death. Does this signify nothing? Does it signify nothing to degrade our faculties and give up the use of our senses, while we are viewing the visible object of nature? If we do so in one thing, why not do it in another? If we set out on this irrational career, where are we to stop? May we not from the example set in Theology, lay aside the use of reason in other sciences also, and thereby impede the progress of knowledge and introduce incalculable evils into the world? I therefore hope that these Gentlemen will, after more mature consideration, discover the doctrine of the Trinity and the idea of a *Mangod* or *Godman* to be unnatural and pregnant with absurdity, and not a mere innocent speculation.

If British Missionaries are under an obligation to preach Christianity to the natives of India, they ought for the glory of their nation, holding so conspicuous a place among the people of the East, and also for the sake of their own characters as a Literary Body, to confine their instructions to the practical parts of Christianity, keeping entirely out of view the doctrine of the Trinity and the idea of a two or three fold nature of God and Man, or God, Man and Angel, which are, to say the least, very much calculated to lower the reputation of Britons both as a learned and as a religious people.

It is characteristic of protestant writers to expose to ridicule any other system of religion which they disapprove. For instance, some of their eminent writers have proceeded so far in attacking the doctrine of Transubstantiation maintained by the Catholics, as to apply to the bread which the Catholics consider as the real flesh of Christ, the epithet *Panarius Deus* or "Breaden God," &c.

Now I only beg to be allowed on this occasion to ask Protestant Gentlemen, who think themselves justified in believing that a human body was, by supernatural power, in a literal sense filled with all the fulness of the Godhead, how they can object so violently to the opinion entertained by the Catholics that a piece of bread by the supernatural power is filled with divine spirit? And if they Catholics the term "Worshippers of a Breaden God,"

how can the professors of the Trinity disapprove of the terms "Worshippers of a Fleshly God, or Jew God" being applied to themselves.

Whoever, in fact is unable to perceive the wide distinction between *supreme* and *eternal* Being and a *helpless mortal man*, must surely confess, if endowed with the faculty of reason, that he had grossly abused it in contemplating the nature of the deity. The immense distance between the human and divine nature cannot be diminished by the efforts of any mortal; and therefore whoever accepts man, dead or alive, for his god, voluntarily sinks himself to the same unfathomable distance below the level of one of the human species. Should he then presume to claim the rank of man, he would thereby equalize his nature with that of his God and be justly chargeable with gross inconsistency. Indeed I do not see what can prevent his fellow-believers, or man-worshippers, from accusing him of blasphemy—in making himself equal with God; or how rational men can avoid viewing him as the victim of early prejudices—however many sciences he may have studied, however many books he will have written, whatever titles of learning may have been best of upon him and with whatever contempt he may affect to rega I the genuine Brahmanical religion. I say, the genuine Brahmanical religion, taught by the Vedas, as interpreted by the inspired Manu, not the popular system of worship adopted by the multitude. If a Christian were to insist on considering the latter with all its corruptions as the standard of Hindooism, then a Hindoo would also be justified in taking as the standard of Christianity, the system of religion which almost universally prevailed in Europe previous to the fifteenth century of the Christian Era, and which is still followed by the majority of Christians (namely, Catholics, Greeks, Armenians) with all its idols, crucifixes, Saints, miracles, pecuniary absolutions from sins, trinity, transubstantiation, relics, holy water, and other idolatrous machinery.

With regard to the doctrine of the atonement, we are given to understand by Christians, that God the Father having been offended by the transgressions of the human race, resolved (though against the suggestion of his mercy) that he would not forgive them unless some adequate sacrifice were offered to him, so that his justice should not be disregarded through the influence of his mercy. this resolution on the part of God the Father, God the son and

great compassion towards men guilty of sins unto death, took upon himself the human nature and offered to God the Father his own life as an adequate atonement, and thereby reconciled to the Father Deity as many men as would believe in the offer of his blood for the remission of sin.

The Missionary Gentlemen hereby maintain, that although God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost were equally skilful and just and equally averse to sin; yet the Father having an act regard to the preservation of the balance of power between Mercy and Justice, did not suffer his Mercy to violate Justice, and insisted, that the sins of men should not be forgiven unless a human sacrifice were made to him. But the Son being more under the influence of mercy and totally regardless of justice, condescended to assume the human nature and to bear the punishment of their sin. Thus by offering himself as a sacrifice, he washed away their transgressions with his blood, without expecting any sacrifice to be made to him, for the satisfaction of his Justice; while God the Holy Ghost, again, took no part whatever in the performance of the sacrifice, either as the Satisfier or the Satisfied, and remained quite neutral. Hence, is it not evident, that God the Father is more strict about the observance of Justice than God the Son? and that God the Father was less liable to the influence of Mercy than God the Son? and that God the Holy Ghost manifested neither Mercy nor Justice in the sacrificial atonement? Do not these circumstances completely overthrow the doctrine which these Gentlemen preach, viz., that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are equally just and merciful?

Secondly. They ascribe to God the attribute of justice according to the human notion of that attribute, *i. e.*, as a just judge can never be so influenced by his mercy as to forgive a man guilty of capital crimes, without inflicting upon him the punishment of death; so God never can violate justice through the influence of his mercy in forgiving sins unto death, without inflicting extreme punishment. Supposing, then, for the sake of argument, that divine justice can be viewed according to the standard of the human notion of justice, I ask whether it is consistent with the human notion of justice to release millions of men each guilty of sins unto death, after inflicting death upon another person, (whether God or man) who never participated in their sins, even though that person had voluntarily proposed to embrace death? or whether it is not a great violation

of justice, according to the human notion of it, to put an innocent person to a painful death for the transgressions of others. notwithstanding he, in his human capacity, manifested very great reluctance to that death, as is admitted in the account of the life of Jesus Christ in Matthew, Ch. XXVI, 37—39.

Thirdly. Sins are of two kinds, that is, sins against God merely, and sins against God and man, such as theft robbery, deception. I therefore wish to know whether it is not an entire disre justice, according to the human notion, that the sins committed against one person should be forgiven by another, without his convex, to such pardon? Whether it is not an infringement of justice on the part of God the Son, according to the human notion of justice. to wash away with his blood the sins of theft, robbery, or murder committed by one man against others, and to disregard their individual sufferings? But if Christians really imagine that true believers in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ have their past sins as well against God as against man, washed away by his blood. are they not extremely presumptuous and culpable in inflicting punishment upon their fellow Christians for any crime they may have committed, knowing that atonement has already been made for it by the blood of their God, which was shed on the cross? Yet we every day see Christians inflict on one another severe punishment, for the sins committed by them, notwithstanding the remission of their sins through their faith in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

Fourthly. These Gentlemen believe, that the Son washes away the sins of those who place their faith in his vicarious sacrifice, and not of men in general. This shews that the act of pardoning the sins of men by God the Son, proceed from a reciprocal consideration, and not from his infinite mercy towards mankind. As according to this doctrine, millions of inhabitants of remote countries, islands and mountains, who never heard even the name of Christianity, have died in sin, ever since the time of the vicarious sacrifice offered by Christ, without having it in their power to enter into the necessary bargain for the forgiveness of their sins by offering, in return, their faith in the atonement made by Christ. But those who have been born in countries where they could readily acquire this faith, while they rely upon the possession of this as the means of purchasing their own salvation, inconsistently condemn such of their fellow-Christians as hope to be saved through a virtuous life and sincere repentance,

accusing them of presumption and self-sufficiency in pretending to be saved by such merits. Yet it is evident that the former who boast of their faith, are the persons really guilty of pride and self-sufficiency, since for this single merit of theirs, they think themselves fully entitled to salvation; and at the same time they contemn and deprecate the merits of others, who nevertheless consider that both faith and good works proceed from the grace of God.

These Gentlemen are apt to find fault with and ascribe unreasonableness to every other system of religion, shutting entirely their eyes upon the total want of reason and rationality in the faith which they themselves profess and preach. For, is there any notion more unreasonable and conducive to immoral practices than the idea, that God *has blood*, and that that blood is offered *by God* to reconcile *to God* such men as, at any time during their lives, place faith in that *blood of God, however guilty* these men may be of offending God and injuring their fellow-creatures.

As to their attempts at the converting of Hindoos to the Christian Faith, these Teachers of strange doctrines may now have been convinced by experience, after the exertions of a quarter of a century, that no grown up native of India possessed of common sense and common honesty, will ever be persuaded to believe in their self-contradictory Creed, and that their religious efforts will be unavailing, unless they adopt, or be enabled to adopt, some unfair means for the promotion of Christianity. Since the Hindoo population in Bengal, from the circumstances of their early marriages, and their continual residence either at home or at an inconsiderable distance from their birth-place, and from the enjoyment of local comfort under the peaceful sway of the British nation, has been increasing with uncommon rapidity, and as they are, at the same time, prohibited from foreign trade by their religious prejudices, prevented from entering into the military service, owing to their habitual aversion to war, and do not now, as in former times, receive gifts of lands free from assessments which tended much to encourage an idle life, many families have already become very indigent and a greater number must, sooner or later, be reduced to poverty. It is therefore more than probable, that the most weak and needy among them may be induced, by the hope of wordly advantages, to sell their conscience and their religion, in the same manner as a great many Israelites have been persuaded to profess Christianity, by the severe policy, adopted

towards Jews on the one hand, and the encouragement to apostatize, held out on the other, by Societies established in Europe for their conversion.

I shall now, in a few words, for the information of the Missionary Gentlemen, lay down our religious creed. In conformity with the Precepts of our ancient religion, contained in the Holy Vedanta, though disregarded by the generality of moderns, we look up to ONE BEING as the animating and regulating principle of the whole collective body of the universe, and as the origin of all individual souls which in a manner somewhat similar, vivify and govern their particular bodies ; and we reject Idolatry in every form and under whatsoever veil of sophistry it may be practised, either in adoration of an artificial, a natural, or an imag ary object. The divine homage which we offer, consists solely in the p c ce of *Daya* or benevolence towards each other, and not in a fanciful faith or in certain motions of the feet, legs, arms, head, tongue or other bodily organs, in pulpit or before a temple. Among other objects, in our solemn devotion, we frequently offer up our humble thanks to God, for the blessings of British Rule in India and sincerely pray, that it may continue in its beneficent operation for centuries to come.

SHIVUPRUSAD SURMA.*

CALCUTTA, *November 15, 1823*

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* The Raja's Pandit, under whose name he brought out this Magazine. Rammohun Roy was fond of using pseudonyms. —ED.

ANSWER OF A HINDOO

TO THE QUESTION,

"WHY DO YOU FREQUENT A UNITARIAN PLACE OF WORSHIP INSTEAD OF THE NUMEROUSLY ATTENDED ESTABLISHED CHURCHES?"

ANSWER OF A HINDOO

To the question, "Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship, instead of the numerously attended established Churches?"

I. Because the prayers read, worship offered, and sermons preached in the Unitarian place of worship remind me of the infinitely wise Ruler of this infinite universe, without ascribing to him as Churchmen do, fellow-creators or co-operators equal in power and other attributes. My plain understanding, though it can comprehend the idea of fellow-creatures, is incapable of forming a notion of one or more fellow-creators each equally possessed of omnipotence and omnipresence.

II. Because Unitarian prayer, worship, and preaching constantly put me in mind of the beneficial design kept in view by the wise and benevolent Author of all; in organizing the members of the animal body, such as bones, veins, vessels, limbs, &c., and in preparing the manifold necessaries of life for our maintenance, as proofs of his gratuitous blessing and free grace; while in those Churches he is declared to have refused mercy and salvation to mankind until innocent blood was offered him to appease his wrath.

III. Because the Unitarian mode of worship exhibits how that infinite and Supreme author has designedly stationed the heavenly bodies, in systematic order, capable of producing and nourishing all the animal and vegetable objects under his divine control; while in those Churches that infinite being is represented as occupying a small space in this limited world, lying in a still smaller space in the womb of a virgin, subject to the control of his parents, though for a season, and daily performing the various animal functions.

IV. Because I feel already weary of the doctrine of "Man-God" or "God-Man"* frequently inculcated by the Brahmans in pursuance of their corrupt traditions: the same doctrine of Man-God, though preached by another body of priests better dressed, better provided for and eminently elevated by virtue of conquest cannot effectually tend to excite my anxiety or curiosity to listen to it.

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* Manu, Dattatraya, Rama, &c., &c., &c.

V. Because I have expressed my disgust, when I heard from the Brahmans the incredible story that God appeared in the form of a party-coloured kite, to accomplish certain purposes. While I maintain the same reverence for the Divine Being, I must be excused believing a similar doctrine held forth in those Churches, as to the appearance of God, on another occasion, in the bodily shape of a dove. I wonder to observe, that from a denial of the existence of God some are stigmatized with the term atheist; while others are highly respected, though they do not scruple, under the shield of religion, to bring the Deity into ridicule by representing him in the form even of a common bird.

VI. Because having been taught in the schools, where the doctrine of the Incarnations of a two-fold or even of a three-fold * nature has been solemnly preached, I perceive no novelty in the idea of a two-fold nature, divine and human, as entertained and expressed in those Churches.

VII. Because in those Churches, the Holy Ghost is represented as the very God and not as the miraculous power of the Deity, at the same time that the language applied there to this person of the God-head; such as "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost," "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee"† fully corresponds to the words and ideas used for the deity in the western and eastern heathen mythologies, and consequently must be offensive to the feelings of those who ascribe to God purity and perfection.

VIII. Because the doctrine of the trinity inculcated in those Churches, consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is defensible on the plea of mystery; while the Trinity preached to us by the Brahmans is a representation of the three principle attributes of the deity in an allegorical sense, and does therefore deserve some momentary attention. The mind which rejects the latter as a production of the fancy, cannot be reasonably expected to adopt the former.

IX. Because Unitarians reject polytheism and idolatry under every sophistical modification, and thereby discountenance all the evil consequences resulting from them

X. Becasue Unitarians believe, profess, and inculcate the doctrine of the divine unity--a doctrine which I find firmly maintained

* नृसिंहावतारः mixed nature of man, lion, and God.

† The Virgin Mary.

both by the Christian Scriptures and by our most ancient writings commonly called the Vedas.

Such are my reasons for attending the Unitarian place of worship instead of the established Churches.

CHUNDRU-SHEKHUR DEV.*

* This tract "bears the signature of Chandra Shekhur Dev, a disciple of Rammohun; but, as Mr. Adam informed Dr. Tuckerman in a letter, dated January 18, 1828, it was entirely Rammohun's own composition." *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, by Miss Collet, p. 85.

TRANSLATION

OF A

SUNSKRIT TRACT

ON

DIFFERENT MODES OF WORSHIP.

BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

CALCUTTA:

1825.

ADVERTISEMENT

A small tract in Sanskrit with a translation into Bengalee has of late been published by a Hindoo Theologian, Sivaprasad Sarma, on the subject of modes of worship with or without images. Having found it to exhibit views of the Hindoo religion somewhat different from those which are commonly entertained by Europeans, I have prepared a translation of it into English with some explanatory notes which I beg to submit to the English reader.

Calcutta, 18th January, 1825.

TRANSLATION OF A SANSKRIT TRACT

ON

DIFFERENT MODES OF WORSHIP.*

QUERY.

In some Sastras many authorities are found enjoining worship by means of idols, in others are passages dissuading from such worship. Doubts having hence arisen, may the learned be pleased to remove them?

(Signed) Ramdhan Sarma.

REPLY.

In answer to the subject of this query the decision which is given, in the essence of all the Sastras (*the Bhagavata*), by that great and worshipful Saint (Vyasa) who had a thorough knowledge of all the Vedas, seems sufficient to remove these doubts entirely. It is as follows (according to the gloss of Sridhara): "Man shall worship me the Lord *of the Universe* by means of an image or any other form, during the intervals of leisure from the performance of the ritual observances prescribed for the class to which he belongs, until he becomes conscious that I dwell in all beings." The worshipful and revered Sridhara commenting upon this text, adds here:— "This verse "shews that worship by means of an idol or any other form is not "absolutely useless, and that as long as a man is subjected to worship "by means of idols, he is also subjected to perform the ritual "observances prescribed to his own class." This passage limits the period of idol worship and explains what practices are its necessary accompaniments.

Vyasa, then proceeds:—"Further, man, by charity *to the needy*, "by honour *to others*, by friendship, and by an equal regard *to all*,

* "I (the tract) was written in Sanskrit by Rammohun Roy under the name of Sivaprasad Sharma, and it was translated into English, with English annotations, by Rammohun Roy under the name of 'A Friend of the author.'" *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, by Miss Collet, p. 71.

"shall direct his worship to me who, by residing in the heart, dwell in "all living creatures."*

Vyasa continues in six and a half verses beginning with the following verse, "Animate objects are preferable to inanimate," &c.; and ending with the following sentence, "He to whom these *four* "duties are prescribed in the above text shall, mentally, do reverence "and profess much respect to all creatures, according to the different "degrees of their visible excellences." He (Vyasa) then concludes:— Man shall respect them "by observing that the all-powerful Lord is in "the heart watching over the soul."† Hence the author himself explains that the observance of "an equal regard to all" *creatures* directed in the above verse is in reference to their being equally related to the divine Spirit and not in reference to their qualities or identities.

It follows therefore that passages enjoining worship by means of forms, and passages dissuading from such worship, should be separately applied to those who entertain those different sentiments.‡

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* Spiritual Devotion is of two kinds. The first consists in meditation on the soul being of divine origin. A continuance of such meditation is believed to have a tendency to rescue the soul from all human feelings and passions, and thereby the soul is ultimately brought to its original divine perfection far surpassing both human search and description. This is the state which is commonly called absorption. The devotees who adhere to this mode of devotion being supposed naturally incapable of committing any moral or social crime, are not subjected to the precepts or prohibitions found in the Sastras.

The second kind of devotion consists in believing that the Deity is possessed of all the attributes of perfection such as omnipresence, omnipotence, &c., and that the individual sentient soul is, in its present state of material connection, separate from, and dependent on, the Deity. Besides, the practice of charity, &c., as mentioned in this text are enjoined on the performers of this mode of devotion as their religious duties. This class of devotees enjoy, after death, eternal beatitude in the highest heaven, as existences separate from the deity and from each other, while worshippers by means of forms, as the Vêdanta affirms, enjoy only temporary bliss.

From what I have noticed as to the two kinds of notions entertained respecting spiritual devotion, the reader will preceive the reason why a teacher of spiritual knowledge sometimes is justified in speaking of the Deity in the first person, in reference to the assumed divine nature of his soul, although in the same discourse, he again treats of God in the third person, in reference to the present separated and subordinate state of the soul.

† "Two birds, co-habitant and co-essential, reside unitedly in one tree *which is the body*. One of them *(the soul)* consumes the variously tasted fruits of its actions: but the other (God) without partaking of them, witnesses *all events*." *Mundakopanishad, ch. the 3rd.*

"God as being resplendent and most proximate to all creatures, is styled the operator in the heart." *Mundaka the second, Section the 2nd.*

‡ Under the Christian dispensation, worship through matter seems unauthorised; John ch: IV. v. 21: "The hour cometh when ye shall, neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father, &c." 23: "But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth," &c.; although in the Judaical religion such worship was sanctioned, as appears from the Books of Leviticus and others, and even from the above quoted verses of the Gospel of John.

HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

TO

HIS COUNTRYMEN

WHO BELIEVE

IN THE

ONE TRUE GOD:

BY

PRUSUNNU KOOMAR THAKOOR.

CALCUTTA:

1823.

ADVERTISEMENT.

My object in publishing this tract is to recommend those to whom it is addressed. to avoid using harsh or abusive language in their religious intercourse with European Missionaries, either respecting them or the objects of their worship, however much this may be countenanced by the example of some of these Gentlemen.

P. K. T.

HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS.*

Those who firmly believe on the authority of the Vedas, that "God is ONE *only* without an equal," and that "He cannot be known either "through the medium of language, thought, or vision: how can he be "known except as existing, *the origin and support of the universe?*"—and who endeavour to regulate their conduct by the following precept, "He who is desirous of eternal happiness should regard another as he "regards himself, and the happiness and misery of another as his own," ought to manifest the warmest affection towards such of their own countrymen as maintain the same faith and practice, even although they have not all studied the Vedas for themselves, but have professed a belief in God only through an acquaintance with their general design. Many among the ten classes of Sannyasis, and all the followers of Guru Nanak, of Dadu, and of Kabir, as well as of Santa, &c., profess the religious sentiments abovementioned. It is our unquestionable duty invariably to treat them as brethren. No doubt should be entertained of their future salvation, merely because they receive instructions, and practise their sacred music, in the vernacular dialect. For Yajnavalkya, with a reference to those who cannot sing the Hymns of the Vedas, has said, "The divine hymns *Rik*, *Gatha*, *Panika*, and *Dakshabihita*, should be sung; because by their constant use man attains supreme beatitude." "He who is skilled in playing on the lute (vina), who is intimately acquainted with the various tones and harmonies, and who is able to beat time in music, will enter without difficulty upon the road of salvation." Again the Siva Dharma as quoted by Raghunandana, says, "He is reputed a Guru who according to the capacity of his disciple instructs him in Sanskrit whether pure or corrupt, in the current language of the country, or by any other means."

Amongst foreigners, those Europeans who believe God to be in every sense ONE, and worship HIM ALONE in spirit, and who extend their benevolence to man as the highest service to God, should be regarded by us with affection, on the grou of the object of their

*Of this tract, as of some other pseudonymous ones, Raja Rammohun Roy was the real author.—ED.

worship being the same as ours. We should feel no reluctance to co-operate with them in religious matters, merely because they consider Jesus Christ as the Messenger of God and their Spiritual Teacher; for oneness in the object of worship and sameness of religious practice should produce attachment between the worshippers.

Amongst Europeans, those who believe Jesus Christ to be God himself, and conceive him to be possessed of a particular form, and maintain Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be one God, should not be treated in an unfriendly manner. On the contrary, we should act towards them in the same manner as we act towards those of our countrymen who, without forming any external image, meditate upon Rama and other supposed incarnations, and believe in their unity.

Again, those amongst Europeans who believing Jesus Christ to be the Supreme Being moreover construct various images of him, should not be hated. On the contrary, it becomes us to act towards those Europeans in the same manner as we act towards such as believe Rama, &c., to be incarnations of God, and form external images of them. For the religious principle of the two last-mentioned sects of foreigners are one and the same with those of the two similar sects among Hindoos, although they are clothed in a different garb.

When any belonging to the second and third classes of Europeans endeavour to make converts of us, the believers in the only living and true God, even then we should feel no resentment towards them, but rather compassion, on account of their blindness to the errors into which they themselves have fallen: since it is almost impossible, as every day's experience teaches us, for men, when possessed of wealth and power, to perceive their own defects.

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THE TRUST DEED OF THE BRAHMO SOMAJ.*

THIS INDENTURE made the eighth day of January in the Year of Christ one thousand eight hundred and thirty **between** DWARKANAUTH TAGORE of Jorasankoe in the town of Calcutta Zumeendor, KALEENAUTH ROY of Burranugur in the Zillah of Havelly in the Suburbs of Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, PRUSSUNNOCOOMAR TAGORE of Pattoriaghatta in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, RAMCHUNDER BIDYABAGISH of Simlah in Calcutta aforesaid Pundit and RAMMOHUN ROY of Manicktullah in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar of the one part and BOYKONTONAUTH ROY of Burranugur in the Zillah of Havelly in the Suburbs of the Town of Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, RADAPERSAUD ROY of Manicktullah in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar and RAMANAUTH TAGORE of Jorasankoe in Calcutta aforesaid Banian (Trustees named and appointed for the purposes hereinafter mentioned) of the other part **witnesseth** that for and in consideration of the sum of Sicca Rupees Ten of Lawful money of Bengal by the said Bykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore to the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ram Chunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy in hand paid at and before the sealing and delivery of these Presents (the receipt whereof they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy do and each and every of them doth hereby acknowledge) and for settling and assuring the messuage land tenements hereditaments and premises hereinafter mentioned to be hereby granted and released to for and upon such uses trusts intents and purposes as are hereafter expressed and declared of and concerning the same and for divers other good Causes and Considerations them hereunto especially moving they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy Have and each and every of them Hath granted bargained sold aliened released and confirmed and by these

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* This is a faithful reprint of the original. It was also published in the Tattwabodhini Patrika, No. 90, for Magh, 1772 Sak. Though not composed by Raja Rammohun Roy, it was "inspired" by him.—ED.

presents Do and each and every of them Doth grant bargain sell alien release and confirm unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Radaperssud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns all that brick built messuage (hereafter to be used as a place for religious worship as is hereinafter more fully expressed and declared) Building or Tenement with the piece or parcel of Land or Ground thereunto belonging and on part whereof the same is erected and built containing by estimation four Cottahs and two Chittacks be the same a little more or less situate lying and being in the Chitpore Road in Sootanooty in the Town of Calcutta aforesaid and butted and bounded as follows (that is to say) on the north by the House and Ground now or formerly belonging to one Fooloorey Rutton on the south by the House and Ground formerly belonging to one Ramkristno Kur since deceased on the east by the House and Ground now or formerly belonging to one Fooloorey Rutton on the south by the House and Ground formerly belonging to one Ramkristno Kur since deceased on the east by the House and Ground now or formerly belonging to one Radamoney Bhamonney and on the west by the said public Road or Street commonly called Chitpore Road or howsoever otherwise the said messuage building land tenements and hereditament or any of them now are or is or heretofore were or was situated tenanted called known described or distinguished and all other the messuages lands tenements and hereditaments (if any) which are or are expressed or intended to be described or comprised in a certain Indenture of bargain and sale hereinafter referred together with all and singular the out houses offices edifices buildings erections Compounds Yards walls ditches hedges fences enclosures ways paths passages woods under-woods shrubs timber and other trees entrances easements lights privileges profits benefits emoluments advantages rights titles members appendages and appurtenances whatsoever to the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises or any part or parcel thereof belonging or in any wise appertaining or with the same or any part or parcel thereof now or at any time or times heretofore held used occupied possessed or enjoyed or accepted reputed deemed taken or known as part parcel or member thereof or any part thereof (all which said messuage buildings land tenements hereditaments and premises are now in the actual possession of or legally vested in the said Boykontonauth Roy Radaperssud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore by virtue of a bargain and sale to them thereof made by the said

Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy for Sicca Rupees Five Consideration by an Indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date and executed previous to the sealing and delivery of these Presents for the Term of one whole Year Commencing from the day next preceding the day of the date of the same Indenture and by force of the statute made for transferring uses into possession and the remainder and remainders reversion and reversions Yearly and other rents issues and profits thereof **and all** the Estate Right Title interest trust use possession inheritance property profit benefit claim and demand whatsoever both at Law and in Equity of them the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy respectively of into upon or out of the same or any part thereof Together with all deeds Pottahs evidences muniments and writings whatsoever which relate to the said premises or any part thereof and which now are or hereafter shall or may be in the hands possession or custody of the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy their heirs executors administrators or representatives or of any person or persons from whom he or they can or may procure the same without action or suit at Law or in Equity. **To have and to hold** the said Messuage Building land tenements hereditaments and all and singular other the premises hereinbefore and in the said Indenture of bargain or sale described and mentioned and hereby granted and released or intended so to be and every part and parcel thereof with their and every of their rights members and appurtenances unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Rada Persaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns but to the uses nevertheless upon the trusts and for the ends intents and purposes hereinafter declared and expressed of and concerning the same and to and for no other ends intents and purposes whatsoever (that is to say) **To the use** of the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivor or their or his assigns **upon Trust** and in confidence that they the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivors or their or his assigns shall and do from time to time and at all times for ever hereafter permit and suffer the said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises with their

appurtenances to be used occupied enjoyed applied and appropriated as and for a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly sober religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other name designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever and that no graven image statue or sculpture carving painting picture portrait or the likeness of anything shall be admitted within the said messuages building land tenements hereditaments and premises and that no sacrifice offering or oblation of any kind or thing shall ever be permitted therein and that no animal or living creature shall within or on the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises be deprived of life either for religious purposes or for food and that no eating or drinking (except such as shall be necessary by any accident for the preservation of life) feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon and that in conducting the said worship and adoration no object animate or inanimate that has been or is or shall hereafter become or be recognized as an object of worship by any man or set of men shall be reviled or slightingly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching praying or in the hymns or other mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said Messuage or Building and that no sermon preaching discourse prayer or hymn be delivered made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe to the promotion of charity morality piety benevolence virtue and the strengthening the bonds of union Between men of all religious persuasions and creeds and also that a person of Good repute and well-known for his knowledge piety and morality be employed by the said trustees or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivor or their or his assigns as a resident Superintendent and for the purpose of superintending the worship so to be performed as is hereinbefore stated and expressed and that such worship be performed daily or at least as often as once in seven days **Provided always** and it is hereby declared and agreed by and between the parties to these presents that in case the several Trustees in and by these presents named and appointed or any of them or any other succeeding Trustees or Trustee of the said

trust estate and premises for the time being to be nominated or appointed as hereinafter is mentioned shall depart this life or be desirous to be discharged of or from the aforesaid Trusts or shall refuse or neglect or become incapable by or in any manner to act in the said trusts then and in such case and from time to time as often and as soon as any such event shall happen it shall be lawful for the said Dwarkananth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohnn Roy during their joint lives or the survivors or survivor of them after the death of any or either of them jointly and in concurrence with the Trustees or Trustee for the time being and in case of and after the death of the survivor of them the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy then for the said Trustees or Trustee by any deed or writing under their or his hands and seals or hand and seal to be attested by two or more credible Witnesses to nominate substitute and appoint some other fit person or persons to supply the place of the Trustees or Trustee respectively so dying desiring to be discharged or refusing or neglecting or becoming incapable by or in any manner to act as aforesaid and that immediately after any such appointment shall be made all and every the messuage or building land tenements and hereditaments premises which under and by virtue of these presents shall be then vested in the Trustees or Trustee so dying desiring to be discharged or refusing or neglecting or becoming incapable by or in any manner to act as aforesaid shall be conveyed transferred assigned and assured so and in such manner that the same shall and may be legally fully and absolutely vested in the Trustees or Trustee so to be appointed in their or his room or stead either solely and alone or jointly with the surviving continuing or acting Trustees or Trustee as the case may require and in his or their heirs or assigns to the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the several ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared or expressed concerning the same and that every such new Trustees or Trustee shall and may act and assist in the management carrying on and execution of the Trusts to which they or he shall bo so appointed (although they or he shall not have been invested with the seisin of the Trustees or Trustee to whose places or place they or he shall have succeeded) either jointly with the surviving continuing or other acting Trustees or Trustee or solely as the case may require in such and the like manner and in all respects as if such new Trustees or

Trustee had been originally appointed by these presents **Provided lastly** and it is hereby further declared and agreed by and between the said Parties to these presents that no one or more of the said Trustees shall be answerable or accountable for the other and others of them nor for the acts defaults or omissions of the other or others of them any consent permission or privity by any or either of them to any act deed or thing to or by the other or others of them done with an intent and for the purpose only of facilitating the Execution of the trusts of these presents notwithstanding nor shall any new appointed Trustees or Trustee or their or his heirs or assigns be answerable or accountable for the acts deeds neglects defaults or omissions of any Trustees or Trustee in or to whose place or places they or he shall or may succeed but such of them the said Trustees shall be answerable accountable and responsible for his own respective acts deeds neglects defaults or omissions only **and** the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussuunocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy do hereby for themselves severally and respectively and for their several and respective heirs executors administrators and representatives covenant grant declare and agree with and to the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns in manner Following (that is to say) that for and notwithstanding any act deed matter or thing whatsoever heretofore by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them had made done committed willingly or willingly omitted or suffered to the contrary they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy at the time of the sealing and delivery of these presents are or one of them is lawfully rightfully and absolutely seized in their or his demesne as of Fee in their or his own right and to their or his own use of the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned and intended to be hereby granted and released with the appurtenances both at Law and in Equity as of in and for a good sure perfect and indefeasible estate of inheritance in fee simple in possession and in severalty without any Condition Contingent Trust Proviso power of limitation or revocation of any use or uses or any other restraint matter or thing whatsoever which can or may Alter Change Charge determine lessen incumber defeat prejudicially affect or make void the same or defeat determine abridge or

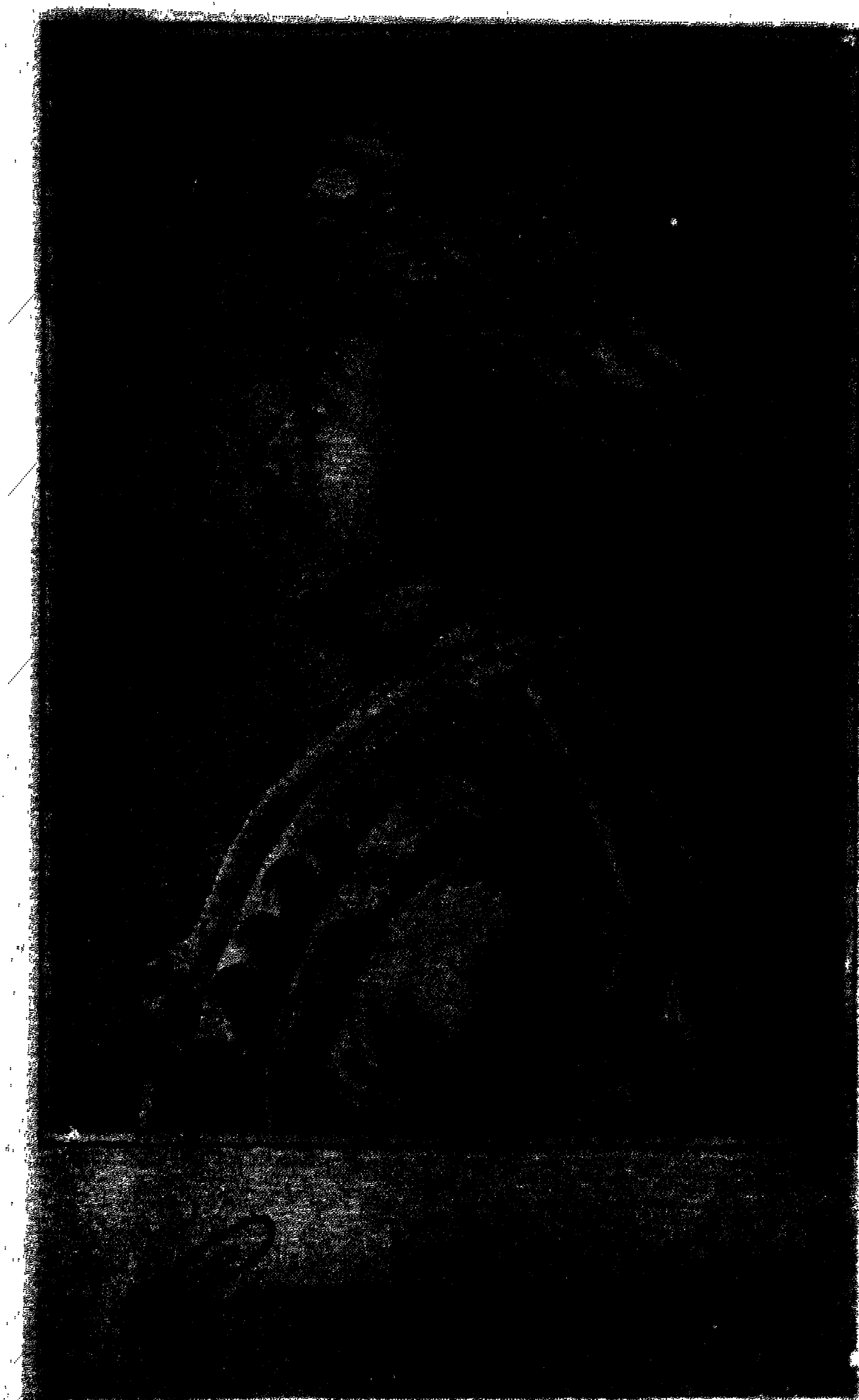
vary the uses or trusts hereby declared and expressed and also that thay the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy (for and notwithstanding any such act deed matter or thing as aforesaid) or some of them now have in themselves one of them hath in himself full power and Lawful and Absolute Authority by these presents to grant bargain sell release and assure the said messuage land tenements hereditament and premises mentioned and intended to be hereby granted and released with the appurtenances and the possession reversion and inheritance thereof unto and to the use of the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore and their heirs to the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore expressed or declared of and concerning the same according to the True intent and meaning these presents **and further** that said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises with their rights members and appurtenances shall from time to time and at all times hereafter remain continue and be to the use upon the Trusts and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared or expressed concerning the same and shall and lawfully may be peaceably and quietly holden and enjoyed and applied and appropriated accordingly without the let suit hindrance claim demand interruption or denial of the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagsih and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them or any or either of their heirs representatives or of any other person or persons now or hereafter claiming or to claim or possessing any estate right title trust or interest of in to or out of the same or any part or parcel thereof by from under or in trust for them or any or either of them and that free and clear and clearly and absolutely acquitted exonerated and discharged or otherwise by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them their or any or either of their Heirs executors administrators and representatives well and sufficiently saved harmless and kept indemnified of from and against all and all manner of former and other gifts grants bargains Sales Leases Mortgages uses wills devises rents arrears of rents estates titles charges and other incumbraces whatsoever had made done committed created suffered or executed by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohoun

Roy or any or either of them or any or either of their heirs or representatives or any person or persons now or hereafter rightfully claiming or possessing any estate right title or interest at Law or in Equity from through under or in trust for them or any or either of them or with their or any or either of their consent privity or procurement or acts means or defaults and moreover that the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kalleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchundar Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or their heirs and representatives and all and every other person or persons whomsover now or hereafter lawfully equitably and rightfully claiming or possessing any estate right title use trust or interest either at Law or in Equity of into upon or out of the said messuage land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned or intended to be hereby granted and released with the appurtenances or any part thereof by from under or in trust for them or any or either of them shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter at the reasonable request of the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of the survivor of their or his assigns make do acknowledge suffer execute and perfect all and every such further and other lawful and reas nable acts things deeds conveyances and assurances in the Law whatsoever for the further better more perfectly absolutely and satisfactorily granting conveying releasing confirming and assuring the said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned to be hereby granted and released and every part and parcel thereof and the possession reversion and inheritance of the same with their and every of their appurtenances unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or other the Trustees or Trustee for the time being and their heirs for the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared and expressed as by the said Trustees and Trustee or his or their council learned in the Law shall be reasonably devised or advised and required so as such further assurance or assurances contain or imply in them no further or other Warranty or Covenants on the part of the person or persons who shall be required to make or execute the same then for or against the acts deeds omissions or defaults of him her or them or his her or their heirs executors administrators and so that he she or they be not compelled or compellable to go or travel from the usual place of his her or their

respective abode for making or executing the same **In witness** whereof the said parties to these presents have hereunto subscribed and set their hands and seals the day and Year first within written.

Dwarkanauth Roy Tagore.
Callynauth Roy.
Prossonnocoomar Tagore.
Sri Ramchandra Vidyavagish
(*Signed in Bengali*).
Rammohun Roy.
Boycontonauth Roy.
Radapersaud Roy.
Ramanauth Tagore.

Sealed and Delivered at Calcutta
aforesaid in the presence of
J. Fountain
Atty. at Law.
Ramgopaul Day



AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with the wish, you have frequently expressed, that I should give you an outline of my life, I have now the pleasure to give you the following very brief sketch:—

My ancestors were Brahmins of a high order, and, from time immemorial, were devoted to the religious duties of their race, down to my fifth progenitor, who about one hundred and forty years ago gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits and aggrandisement. His descendants ever since have followed his example and, according to the usual fate of courtiers, with various success, sometimes rising to honour and sometimes falling; sometimes rich and sometimes poor; sometimes excelling in success, sometimes miserable through disappointment. But my maternal ancestors, being of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth, and of a family than which none holds a higher rank in that profession, have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious observances and devotion, preferring peace and tranquility of mind to the excitements of ambition, and all the allurements of worldly grandeur.

In comformity with the usage of my paternal race, and the wish of my father, I studied the Persian and Arabic languages, these being indispensable to those who attached themselves to the courts of the Mahommedan princes; and agreeably to the usage of my maternal relations, I devoted myself to the study of the Sanskrit and the theological works written in it, which contain the body of Hindoo literature, law and religion.

* Miss Carpenter thus introduced this Autobiographical Sketch into her book, 'The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy':—

"The following letter from Rammohun Roy himself first appeared in the 'Athenæum,' and in the 'Literary Gazette;' from one or other of which it was copied into various newspapers. It was written just before he went to France. It was probably designed for some distinguished person who had desired him to give an outline of his history; and he adopted this form for the purpose. The letter may be considered as addressed to his friend, Mr. Gordon, of Calcutta."

Miss Collet calls it "the spurious 'autobiographical letter' published by Sandford Arnot in the *Athenæum* of October 5, 1833."—ED.

When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindoos. This, together with my known sentiments on that subject, having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me, and restored me to his favour; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants; and I enjoyed the confidence of several of them even in their public capacity. My continued controversies with the Brahmins on the subject of their idolatry and superstition, and my interference with their custom of burning widows, and other pernicious practices, revived and increased their animosity against me; and through their influence with my family, my father was again obliged to withdraw his countenance openly, though his limited pecuniary support was still continued to me.

After my father's death I opposed the advocates of idolatry with still greater boldness. Availing myself of the art of printing, now established in India, I published various works and pamphlets against their errors, in the native and foreign languages. This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three Scotch friends, to whom, and the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful.

The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to *Brahminism*, but to a *perversion* of it; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmins was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey. Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and resistance to my opinions, several highly respectable persons, both among my own relations and others, began to adopt the same sentiments.

I now felt a strong wish to visit Europe, and obtain by personal observation, a more thorough insight into its manners, customs,

religion, and political institutions. I refrained, however, from carrying this intention into effect until the friends who coincided in my sentiments should be increased in number and strength. My expectations having been at length realised, in November, 1830, I embarked for England, as the discussion of the East India Company's charter was expected to come on, by which the treatment of the natives of India, and its future government, would be determined for many years to come, and an appeal to the King in Council, against the abolition of the practice of burning widows, was to be heard before the Privy Council; and his Majesty the Emperor of Delhi had likewise commissioned me to bring before the authorities in England certain encroachments on his rights by the East India Company. I, accordingly arrived in England in April, 1831.

I hope you will excuse the brevity of this sketch, as I have no leisure at present to enter into particulars, and

I remain, &c.,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

INTRODUCTION.*

SEVERAL of my friends having expressed a wish to be possessed of copies of my Translation of the Vedas, and Controversies with those Brahmans who are advocates for idolatry, I have collected for republication such of those tracts as I could find, either among my own papers or those of my friends who happened to have brought them from India, and now offer them to the public in their original form.

I feel induced to set forth here, briefly, the substance of these writings, to facilitate the comprehension, of their purport, as being foreign to the generality of European readers. The Vedas (or properly speaking, the spiritual parts of them) uniformly declare, that man is prone by nature, or by habit, to reduce the object or objects of his veneration and worship (though admitted to be unknown) to tangible forms, ascribing to such objects attributes, supposed excellent according to his own notions: whence idolatry, gross or refined, takes its origin, and perverts the true course of the intellect to vain fancies. These authorities, therefore, hold out precautions against framing a deity after human imagination, and recommend mankind to direct all researches towards the surrounding objects, viewed either collectively or individually, bearing in mind their regular, wise and wonderful combinations and arrangements, since such researches cannot fail, they affirm, to lead an unbiassed mind to a notion of a Supreme Existence, who so sublimely designs and disposes of them, as is everywhere traced through the universe. The same Vedas represent rites and external worship addressed to the planets and elementary objects, or personified abstract notions, as well as to defied heroes, as intended for persons of mean capacity; but enjoin spiritual devotion, as already described, benevolence, and self-control, as the only means of securing bliss.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

London, July 23, 1832.

P. S.—In all the following Translations, except the Cena Upanishad, the mode of spelling Sanskrit words in English, adopted by Dr. J. B. Gilchrist, has been observed.

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*This Introduction appears in the 'Translation of several principal Books, Passages, and Texts of the Veds, and of some controversial works on Brahmunical Theology' which Rammohun Roy published in London in 1832.—ED.

EXPOSITION

OF THE

PRACTICAL OPERATION

OF THE

JUDICIAL AND REVENUE SYSTEMS OF INDIA

AND OF THE

General Character and Condition of its Native Inhabitants

AS SUBMITTED IN EVIDENCE TO THE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

WITH

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

ALSO

A BRIEF PRELIMINARY SKETCH OF THE ANCIENT AND MODERN BOUNDARIES, AND OF THE HISTORY OF THAT COUNTRY.

Elucidated by a Map.

BY

RAJAH RAMMOHUN ROY

LONDON
SMITH ELDER & Co CORNHILL
1832

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which was appointed in February, 1831, and re-appointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter, invited Raja Rammohun Roy to appear before it. He declined this request, but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control," which besides duly appearing in the Blue Books were published by him in a separate volume, entitled *Exposition of the practical operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India, etc.* We have omitted the map which the author annexed to this volume.—Ed.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

INDIA, anciently called the "Bharata Varsha"* after the name of a monarch called "Bharata"† is bounded on its south by the sea; on the east partly by this sea, and partly by ranges of mountains separating it from the ancient China, or rather the countries now called Assam, Cassay and Arracan; on the north by a lofty and extensive chain of mountains which divides it from Tibet; and on the west partly by ranges of mountains, separating India from the ancient Persia, and extending towards the Western Sea, above the mouth of the Indus, and partly by this sea itself. It lies between the 8th and 35th degrees of north latitude, and the 67th and 93rd degrees of east longitude.‡

Wide tracts of this empire were formerly ruled by different individual princes, who, though politically independent of, and hostile to each other, adhered to the same religious principles, and commonly observed the leading rites and ceremonies taught in the Sanskrit language, whether more or less refined. These tracts of land

* "Varsha" implies a large tract of continent, cut off from other countries by natural boundaries, such as oceans, mountains, or extensive deserts.

† "Bharata" a humane and powerful prince, supposed to have sprung from the "*Indu-Vansa*" or the lunar race.

‡ The boundary mountains are interrupted on the east between 90° and 91° E. and lat. 26° and 27° N. Hence the countries to the east of the Brahmaputra, as Assam, Ava, Siam, &c., as far as 102° E. long. are by some authors considerd as part of India, though beyond its natural limits; and by European writers usually called "India beyond the Ganges." There, relics of Sanskrit literature, and remains of Hindu temples are still found. Other ancient writers, however, considered these countries as attached to China, the inhabitants having greater resemblance to the Chinese in features.

The western boundary mountains are in like manner broken at long. 70° East, and at lat. 34° North. Consequently the countries beyond that natural limit, such as Cabul and Candahar, are supposed by some to be included in India, and by others in Persia. But many Hindu antiquities still exist there to corroborate the former notion.—Not only the northern boundary mountains of India, but also those mountains which form the eastern and western limits of it, are by the ancient writers on India, termed Himalaya, and considered branches of that great chain. "In the north direction is situated the prince of mountains, the 'immortal Himalaya' which immersing both in the eastern and western seas, stands on earth as a standard of measure (or line of demarcation)".
—Kalidasa.

are separated from each other by rivers, or hills, or sometimes by imaginary lines of demarcation.

The part styled "the civilized," in the sacred writings of the Brahmans, consists of two large divisions.*

The first is called "the civilized and sacred land;"† which, extending from the banks of the Indus at 34° north and 72°25 east, in a south-easterly direction, along the foot of the Himalaya mountains as far as 26°30 north and 87°30 east, lies between this line and the northern limits of the Vindhya range, which runs from 22° north and 73° east, to 25° north and 87° 30 east, through Rajmahal, Behar, Benares, the Provinces of Allahabad, and of Malwa, along the north side of the Nerbudda, almost to the west coast of India. The second division is named merely "the civilized land," and is situated between the eastern and western coasts, terminating towards the east at the mouth of the Ganges, about 22° north, and 87°30 east, and on the west towards the mouth of the Indus, at nearly 22° north, and 72° 30. east, comprehending the large province of Gujrat.

The countries situated beyond the limits of the civilized lands, as above described, whether mountains, valleys, or low lands, though included within the Bharata Varsha, are declared to have been chiefly inhabited by *Mlechchhas*, or barbarians, and were therefore called barbarous countries. ‡

In consequence of the multiplied divisions and sub-divisions of the land into separate and independent kingdoms, under the authority

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* Manu, the most ancient authority, thus defines their limits. "The lands lying as far as the eastern and as far as the western oceans, *and* between the mountains just mentioned (Himalaya and Vindhya) are known to the wise by the name of "Aryavarta" or the land inhabited by respectable people." Ch. II., v. 22.

In his translation of this passage, *Sir William Jones*, by omitting to refer to the commentary, which substitutes the copulative Sanskrit particle "*Cha*" for "*Eba*," has thus translated this passage: "As far as the eastern and as far as the western oceans, between the two mountains just mentioned, lies the tract which the wise have named Aryavarta." This rendered the description obscure, if not wholly unintelligible; since the countries lying between these two ranges of mountains are scarcely situated between the eastern and western seas.

† Because this division includes within it the tract which is called the Sacred Land, situated to the north of Delhi, thus described by Manu: "Between the two divine rivers Saraswati and Drishadwati, lies the tract of land which the sages have named Brahmavarta, because it was frequented by gods."

‡ A country, where the distinction of the four classes (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra) is not observed, is known as '*Mlechchha Desa*' or "barbarous country," as quoted by Raghunandana.

of numerous princes hostile towards each other,* and owing to the successive introduction of a vast number of castes and sects, destroying every texture of social and political unity, the country, (or, properly speaking, such parts of it as were contiguous to foreign lands), was at different periods invaded, and brought under temporary subjection to foreign princes, celebrated for power and ambition.

About 900 years ago, the Mahommedan princes, advancing by the north-west, began to ravage and overrun the country; and after continued efforts, during several centuries, they succeeded in conquering the best parts of India. Their rule was transferred in succession from one dynasty of conquerors to another (Ghazni, Ghor, and Afghan), till 1525 of the Christian era, when prince Babar, a descendant of Timur (or Tamerlane), in the fifth generation, established his throne in the centre of Hindustan. His offspring (the Moghul dynasty) exercised the uncontrolled sovereignty of this empire † for nearly two centuries (with the exception of about sixteen years), under a variety of changes, according to the rise or decrease of their power.

In the year 1712, the star of the Moghul ascendancy inclined towards descent, and has since gradually sunk below the horizon. The princes oftener consulted their own personal comfort than the welfare of the state, and relied for success on the fame of their dynasty, rather than on sound policy and military valor. Not only their crowns, but their lives also, depended on the good will of the nobles, who virtually assumed independence of the sovereign power, and each sought his own individual aggrandisement.

At present, all the southern and eastern, as well as several of the western provinces of the empire, have gradually fallen into the possession of the English. The army they employed chiefly consisted of the natives of India, a country into which the notion of patriotism has never made its way. Those territories were in fact transferred to British possession from the rule of a number of the rebellious nobility. While the greatest part of the northern provinces beyond

* Compare the feeble state of Persia when ruled by several independent princes with the formidable power she enjoyed when consolidated under the empire of the *Sufis*.

Direct your attention to a still nearer country, I mean England: and compare the consequences formerly arising from her divided resources, with her present state of elevation under the subsisting union.

† It may be considered as consisting of the following twenty provinces: Delhi, Lahore, Cashmere, Cabul, Candahar, Ajmere, Multan, Gujrat, Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Behar, Bengal, Orissa, Malwah, Khandesh, Berar, Aurungabad, Golconda, Bejapoor.

the river Sutlej has fallen into the hands of Runjeet Singh, the chief of a tribe commonly called *Sikhs*.

Akbar the Second, present heir and representative of the imperial house of Timur, enjoys only the empty title of "King of Delhi," without either royal prerogative or power.

Runjeet Singh, sovereign of north-western India (consisting of Lahore, Multan, Cashmere, and Eastern Cabul), is considered highly gifted with prudence and moderation, and apparently inclined towards liberal principles; judicious in the discharge of public duties, and affable in private intercourse. The idea of constitutional government being entirely foreign to his mind, he has necessarily followed the same system of arbitrary rule which has been for ages prevailing in the country. The government he has established, although it be purely military, is nevertheless mild and conciliatory.

With regard to the circumstances under which a body of respectable English merchants (commonly known by the name of the Honourable East India Company) first obtained their Charter of Privileges in 1600, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, to carry on trade with the East Indies; and with respect to the particulars of their success in procuring from the Emperor of Hindustan (Jahangir), and from several of his successors permission to establish commercial factories, as well as the enjoyment of protection, and various privileges in that country; with relation further to their conquests, which commencing about the middle of the 18th century have extended over the greater part of India,—conquests principally owing to the dissensions and pusillanimous conduct of the native princes and chiefs, as well as to the ignorance existing in the East, of the modern improvements in the art of war, combined with the powerful assistance afforded to the Company by the naval and military forces of the crown of England,—I refer the reader to the modern histories of India,* such particulars and details being quite foreign to the object which I have for the present in view.

The government of England, in the meantime, received frequent intimations of the questionable character of the means by which their acquisitions had been obtained and conquests achieved, and of the

* Bruce's Annals; Anderson's History of Commerce in McPherson's Annals; Sir Thomas Roe's Journal and Letters; Raynal's East and West Indies; Orme's Historical fragments, and on the Government and people of Hindostan; Dow's History; Malcolm's Sketch of the political History of India; Ditto, Central India; and Mill's History of British India.

abuse of power committed by the Company's servants,* who were sent out to India from time to time to rule the territory thus acquired; and the impression in consequence was that the immense, or rather incalculable, distance, between India and England, impeding intercourse between the natives of the two countries, and the absence of efficient local check on the exercise of power by the Company's executive officers, as well as the hope of support from their influential employers in England, might lead many of them to neglect or violate their duties and bring reproach on the national character. Under these apprehensions the British Parliament in 1773, by 13th Geo. 111, commonly called the Regulating Act, declared that all territorial acquisitions by conquest or treaty belong to the state, directed that all correspondence connected with their civil or military government should be submitted to the consideration of the Ministers; and subsequently in 1784, (by act 24th Geo. III. cap. 25) a Board of Commissioners was established by the crown as a control over the East India Company and the executive officers in India. The Board consists of a president, who usually has a seat in the British cabinet, and of several members, honorary and otherwise, with a secretary and other requisite subordinate officers. This institution has answered the purpose as far regards subjects of a general nature.

The system of rule introduced and acted on in India by the executive officers of the Company, previous to 1793, was of a mixed nature—European and Asiatic. The established usages of the country were for the most part adopted as the model of their conduct, in the discharge of political, revenue, and judicial functions, with modification at the discretion of the local authority. In addition to the exercise of the sovereign power, power declared through policy to have been vested in them by the throne of Delhi, they continued to act in their commercial capacity with greater success than previous to their sovereignty.† In consideration of the extensive territories acquired by the Company in different parts of India, they deemed it advisable to establish three governments at the three presidencies of

* They were generally relations and friends of the leading members of the company, twenty-four in number, called the "Directors," first elected in 1709, and invested by the general body of the company with the power of managing their territorial possessions in India, as well as their commerce in the East and West.

† The monopoly of salt has proved an immense source of revenue to them. Besides the factories of opium, silk, cloth, &c., have been established in many places favourably situated for commerce.

Bengal, Madras and Bombay; the two latter being, since, 1773, subordinate to the first in matters of a political nature.

The Marquis of Cornwallis, a straight-forward honest statesman, assumed the reins of government in Bengal in 1786.* He succeeded not only in consolidating the British power in its political relations in those remote regions, but also in introducing, in 1793, material changes in every department, particularly in the revenue and judicial systems. These changes approximating to the institutions existing in England, are calculated to operate beneficially, if regularly reduced to practice.

As my evidence respecting the government of India which will form the main body of this treatise gives a particular account of the practical operation of these systems, I refrain from a repetition of it in this place.

From occasionally directing my studies to the subjects and events peculiarly connected with Europe, and from an attentive though partial, practical observation in regard to some of them, I felt impressed with the idea, that in Europe literature was zealously encouraged and knowledge widely diffused; that mechanics were almost in a state of perfection, and politics in daily progress; that moral duties were, on the whole, observed with exemplary propriety notwithstanding the temptations incident to a state of high and luxurious refinement; and that religion was spreading, even amid scepticism and false philosophy.

I was in consequence continually making efforts for a series of years, to visit the Western World, with a view to satisfy myself on those subjects by personal experience. I ultimately succeeded in surmounting the obstacles to my purpose, principally of a domestic nature; and having sailed from Calcutta on the 19th of November, 1830, I arrived in England on the 8th of April following. The particulars of my voyage and travels will be found in a Journal which I intend to publish; together with whatever has appeared to me most worthy of remark and record in regard to the intelligence, riches and power, manners, customs, and especially the female virtue and excellence existing in this country.

* Since the formation of the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India, the Crown has exercised the right of selection in regard to the Governor-General to be nominated by the Company.

The question of the renewal of the Honorable East India Company's Charter* being then under the consideration of the Government, and various individuals connected with India having been examined as witnesses on the subject, the authorities wished me also, as a native of that country, to deliver my evidence ; which was, in consequence, given as in the following pages.

Although it has been printed among the other minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, I deem it proper to publish it in a separate form, for the purpose of prefixing these preliminary explanations, and of accompanying it with notes and replies to remarks made thereon, by persons whose opinions are deserving of notice.

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*The Company's Charter was last renewed by the Crown in 1813, with certain modifications, for a period of twenty years, and consequently expires in 1833, unless previously renewed.